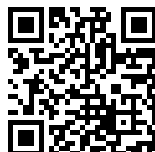

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FAIRY STORIES

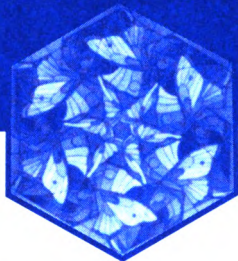
RETOLD FROM
ST. NICHOLAS

A little
told me
that this book belongs to
Miss ^{Worcester} ~~Worcester~~ ^{Kind} ~~Kind~~
James Castle.



Miss Shirley Hendry
Bridgman, N.Y.

FAIRY STORIES



Given in memory of
Clarice Lybart Balbach
(1911-1994)

and

William R. Balbach
(1910-2005)

by

Daniel & Barbara Balbach

**The University
of Michigan-Dearborn
Mardigian Library**



FAIRY STORIES

RETOLD FROM ST. NICHOLAS

*a little girl told me this book
belongs to Barbara Sands*



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11

FAIRY STORIES

DO you seek the road to Fairyland?
I'll tell; it's easy, quite.
Wait till the yellow moon gets up
O'er purple seas by night,
And gilds a shining pathway
That is sparkling diamond bright.
Then, if no evil power be nigh
To thwart you out of spite,
And 'f you know the very words
To cast a spell of night,
You get upon a thistledown,
And, if the breeze is right,
You sail away to Fairyland
Along this track of light.

ERNEST THOMPSON SETON.

FAIRY STORIES

THE WAY TO FAIRY-LAND

BY NORA PERRY

WHAT is the way to fairy-land?
Which is the road to take?
Over the hills, or over the sand
Where the river ripples break?

The hills stand listening night and day
As if to a wonderful tale;
The river whispers along its way
Secrets to every sail.

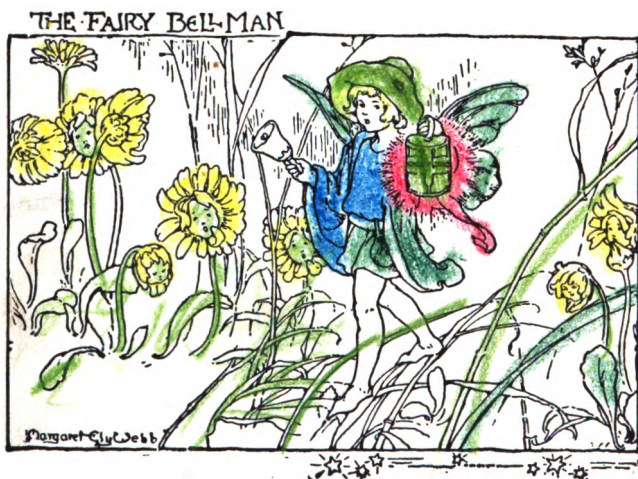
They must be listening and whispering there
With the fairy-folk, I know;
For what but this is the sound in the air
So sweet, and soft, and low?

The sound that floats o'er the misty hills,
And runs with a little shiver,
As of a thousand musical trills,
Over the running river.

FAIRY STORIES

O hills that stand 'so lofty there,
Listening night and day,
Listen to *me* and show me where
The fairy-folk do stray!

And river, river, whisper low,
Whisper me low and sweet,
Tell me the secrets that you know
Of the fairy-folk's retreat.



"Who told you there were no fairies?" she repeated, thumping her crutch upon the book, and looking into Tinkey's bewildered face. "There are just as many fairies now as ever, and they are just as powerful, too. Dear me, boy, don't stare at me so! The eyes will drop out of your head. You don't believe me, eh?"

"I am sure, ma'am," stammered Tinkey, "I did not say—"

"No, but you thought! Nobody need ever speak to a fairy. You do not believe I am a fairy. Well, perhaps you will, before the day is over, for I mean to grant the very first wish you make. Be careful, now, what you wish for first; for, as surely as I am a fairy, whatever it is, you will get it!"

Then the funny little old woman made one jump on to the sill of the attic window; and Tinkey, looking after her, saw a tiny carriage, with sails like a boat, and ten butterflies harnessed to it, waiting for her. She sprang into it, took a seat, waved her crutch to the astonished boy, and the butterflies carried her up and up in the air until she was quite out of sight.

Wondering, yet half inclined to think he had been dreaming, Tinkey took up his grammar,

tucked his fairy-tale book under a potato-sack, and went slowly down the stairs. There was no one in the entry as he took his hat from the rack and sluggishly dragged his unwilling feet across the garden walk into the road.

Not a single lesson had Tinkey studied, and he was half tempted to wish he knew them all. But, no! He would not waste a fairy wish upon one day's lessons! Perhaps he would wish for a bicycle, or a new fishing-pole, or, better still, for a million million dollars, and then he could buy anything he wanted.

It was a scorching day in June, and the road to school was very hot and dusty, excepting at one spot, where a little wooden bridge crossed a narrow creek that crept through the meadows on each side of the road. The water rippled by with a cooling, musical gurgle, and Tinkey stopped to rest his chin on his hand, his elbow on the railing, and follow the stream with his eyes, into his father's meadow, till it wound around under a clump of large trees, where a group of cows and their babies stood knee-deep in the water, under the cool, shading branches. The school-bell was clanging noisily; the sun was pouring its hot rays on Tinkey's head;

punishment was in store for neglected lessons;
and reality for a moment was stronger than



“‘I WISH I WAS THAT RED-AND-WHITE CALF’”

hope. 'Quite forgetting his fairy visitor, Tinkey cried aloud:

“Oh, dear, I wish I was that red-and-white calf under the willow, and need n't go to school!”

In one second there was a cool rippling of

water around Tinkey's feet, and, instead of two legs clothed in dusty trousers, there were four covered with hair, in the running stream, while something went flopping on one side and the other, keeping away all obtrusive flies.

Tinkey turned his head, and took a long look at his hairy sides, his long, awkward legs, and the reflection of his face in the clear water. Then he burst out into one long, wailing cry, the well-known bleat of a distressed calf.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" cried Tinkey. But it sounded like "B-a-a, b-a-a." "I have made my wish, and wasted it by turning myself into a hateful, ugly calf. Oh! Oh!"

Here a motherly old cow lifted her head, and tossing it up, said:

"Be quiet! Don't make such a row!"

But, as Tinkey had not yet learned the cow language, it only sounded to him like "Moo-o-o," and he paid no attention to it. The old cow lowered her head, and gave him a sharp dig with her horns, which made his tears flow faster than ever. But not being accustomed to weep over a brook, Tinkey wanted his pocket-handkerchief, and, forgetting he no longer possessed pockets, he reared up on his hind legs and tried to find

his pocket with his fore legs; he strained his neck in looking up and down his sides, and cut up such antics in the water that the cows became



"HE TRIED TO FIND HIS POCKET"

quite indignant at having their quiet so disturbed, and fairly drove him away.

"Mrs. Whiteface always did spoil that calf," said one old cow, pettishly; "he is really too rude to be in decent society, making such a noise and commotion! Just see how he has muddied the water with his capers!"

"Let the little plague amuse himself in the sun

awhile, until he learns to behave himself properly," grumbled another.

But Mrs. Whiteface, the motherly old cow who had first spoken to the distressed calf, was sure something must be the matter with her baby. Never before had he acted so strangely, and, full of anxiety, she slowly waded to the bank and followed him across the meadow. He was seeking a shady spot under a great spreading oak-tree, walking slowly and clumsily along, his head and his tail hanging down in the most disconsolate way.

"What is the matter with you?" asked Mrs. Whiteface, kindly.

"Moo-o-o," sounded in Tinkey's ears; and, afraid of feeling the old cow's horns again, he tossed up his head, trotted away as fast as his awkward legs would carry him.

He ran across the meadow, through the corn-field, around the duckpond and into the yard adjoining the school-house, a bare stretch of ground without shade or shelter. He was all out of breath, and trembling from head to foot, as he stood for a moment's rest under the school-room window. The voice of the school-master came through the open window, calling out the names of the boys.

Now Tinkey's proper name was Frank Kirke, but the school-boys had each a nickname, and were known at home and in play-time quite as well by such names as Tinkey, Bobo, Fuzzy, or Tip, as by their proper names of Frank, Harry, Tom or George. But Tinkey knew very well who was meant when the master asked:

"Where is Frank Kirke this morning?"

"Here I am, sir," said Tinkey, thrusting his head in at the open window.

"B-a-a-a," said the calf, and all the boys shouted, and the girls giggled, making a great commotion in the school-room. Even the master felt a little twitching in the muscles about his mouth, but he only said, very sternly:

"John Smith, drive that calf away!"

Tinkey looked around for the calf, and then suddenly remembered that he, Tinkey Kirke, was the animal to be driven away.

"John Smith," thought Tinkey, scornfully; "he had better try it. I can lick John Smith any day." So, when John Smith lazily sauntered into the school-yard, he was amazed to see a calf bristling all over with fight, that, before he could make an effort to drive it away, rushed forward, thrust a hairy head between his legs, and sent him sprawling upon the ground.

But Tinkey had forgotten that he could not throw stones, and, before he could make another charge, John had pelted him so rapidly with heavy stones that he was glad to run away, bruised and sore all over. As he stood in the hot



"HE SENT HIM SPRAWLING TO THE GROUND"

June sun, afraid to venture near the water, or into the meadow, Tinkey thought, mournfully, that it was not much fun to be a calf, after all. He wandered about sore and sorry, until, suddenly, with a rush and loud shouts the boys and girls came pouring out of the school-house.

"Recess! Hurrah!" thought Tinkey, hurrying to join his school-fellows, and quite forgetting that he was a calf, as he trotted into the play-ground.

Here were boys eating luncheon, boys playing marbles, boys spinning tops, boys swapping pencils and jackstones, boys whittling "pussy" sticks, but not a boy, no, not one, reading or studying.



" 'TOM BATES, YOU 'RE CHEATING! ' "

Tinkey ambled up to one group after another, but none of the boys noticed him, except to shove him away, if he came too close. His especial friend, Jim Jones, was one of three boys playing marbles, and Tinkey, unrecognized and unnoticed, stood near, sadly conscious that he could not use any one of his four long, clumsy legs to join in the game. But as no one drove him away, he stood watching the play until Tom Bates cheated. There was no doubt about it,

and Tinkey thrust his head into the group, crying:

"Tom Bates, you 're cheating!" At least, that is what he thought he said. What he really did say, was—"B-a-a-a!"

Never was a game broken up more quickly! Every boy was on his feet, with a stick or a stone, and, in an instant, every other game was abandoned to make general war upon poor Tinkey.

Driven away, he found two boys strolling down the road, talking, and heard this sentence:

"He's only playing off sick, I know. Tinkey Kirke is the laziest boy in school; he never knows his lessons."

"I 'm no lazier than you are, Bobo Wells," cried Tinkey, in a prolonged "B-a-a-a!" at the same time giving Bobo a vicious dig in the ribs with his head.

"Jiminy!" screamed the boy. "What 's that? Hey! Here 's a young mad bull, boys! Hey! At him!"

Every boy in the play-ground answered the loud call, and Tinkey, with a wholesome fear of sticks and stones, galloped away, followed by a shower of boy ammunition.

He was very sore all over, very weary, very hot, and there came over him a great longing to put his aching head down into his mother's lap to be petted, and have a good cry. He was very hungry, too, and the attempt which he made to eat grass proved a miserable failure. "It is too nasty for anything," Tinkey decided. Just as he reached home, the family were sitting down to dinner, and Mr. Kirke asked:

"Where is Tinkey? He is always late!"

"Here I am, Papà," said Tinkey, in his long "B-a-a-a," walking in at the door and trying to take his seat.

With laughing shouts, the whole family sprang up to drive him away, and Tinkey ran to his mother for protection. Surely, surely, his own dear mother would know him!

But Mrs. Kirke ran screaming away. Something was the matter with the calf, she thought, and she was afraid of it. Mr. Kirke caught him at last, but not until every chair was upset, the table-cloth pulled off, the dishes smashed and scattered, the dinner a wreck, and the room in the direst confusion.

Well belabored with a heavy stick, Tinkey was led to the barn and tied up, to think over the de-

lights of being a calf and the misery of being a well-fed school-boy with a happy home.

He was horribly hungry, and made several at-



" TRYING TO TAKE HIS SEAT "

tempts to eat the hay and oats before him, but he could not swallow them.

On a level with his head there was a kitchen window, plainly visible through the great space left by the barn doors standing wide open. It was baking day, and loaves of bread stood on the table; three large, tempting pies were cooling on the window-sill, while a pitcher of milk was

just behind them on the table. Tinkey tugged and jerked, until he succeeded in breaking the rope holding him, and was once more free. He trotted off to the window, only to meet a new difficulty. It did not occur to him that he could eat a pie in any way but with plate, knife, and fork, or, without these, by taking it in his fingers. His hands, or fore legs, would not reach up to the window-sill, try as hard as he would to make them, and, in his efforts, he knocked two of the pies to the ground, breaking them to pieces. Only one remained, and, inspired by hunger, Tinkey at last put his nose down to the plate and ate up the pie. By a great effort of stretching he got the pitcher over on its side, and eagerly lapped the milk as it ran out. But, suddenly, a most tremendous blow fell upon his head, as his mother shouted:

“Get out! Go away! Father, the calf has broken loose!”

Quite sure that his father would find a stronger rope the next time, Tinkey ran away as fast as he could, through the cabbage-patch, over the flower-beds, around the house, from the kitchen window to the front porch, where he stood panting and listening as his father hunted in the barn

and at the back of the house for him. The front door was standing ajar, and as Tinkey looked at it a brilliant idea rushed into his head—he would go into his own room and take a nap.

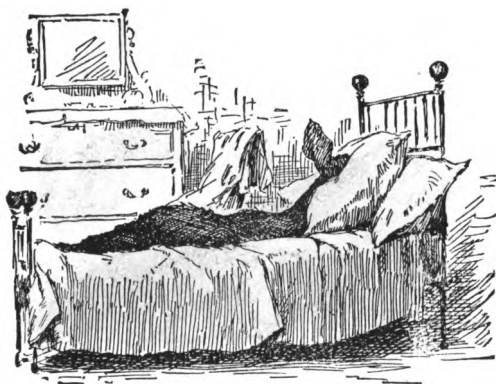
His head ached, and every bone in his body seemed to be sore with the variety of hammering he had received. Nobody was about. Indeed, the confusion in the dining-room was likely to keep everybody busy for one afternoon, and nobody saw Tinkey as he made frantic efforts to walk upstairs on his hind legs, and hold the balusters with his fore legs. By and by it occurred to him to try the ascent with all his legs down, and at last he accomplished it in that way.

Getting into bed presented another difficulty, as his legs would not go up high enough to scramble in, in his usual fashion, but, after many efforts, the desired result was gained by standing sidewise and rolling himself over. Then a long sleep fell upon the weary little boy-calf, and he dreamed of cool waters, of shady lanes, of refreshing drink, until a welcome sound awakened him—the tea-bell.

But he was confused by his nap, and he mistook the bell for the summons to breakfast. Upon a chair were thrown his best suit and some

clean underclothing that his mother had been mending; and, knowing he would be late, as he must have failed to hear his mother's usual morning summons, Tinkey scrambled awkwardly to the floor and took up a shirt.

By a great effort he reared up, and tried to lift



"HE DREAMED OF COOL WATERS."

this garment over his head. All in vain! Struggle as he would, it only hung upon the hoofs that had no fingers to grasp it, until it fell upon the floor. Perhaps he could do better with the trousers! At least he could try.

But the trousers were still worse. He braced himself against the wall, and hung the waistband upon his fore legs, but all his efforts failed

to get even one hind leg into them. He reeled over, he fell upon the floor, he reared up, and tipped over. He even tried to crawl into his



"BUT THE TROUSERS WERE STILL WORSE"

clothes, after pushing them into place upon the floor.

But it was of no use, and, while he was still working over this problem, harder than any sum he had ever puzzled out in school, the door opened.

Again that dreadful shout, now so familiar to

him, fell upon his ears, as Bob, his younger brother, rushed into the room.

"Oh, Papa! Mamma! Here 's fun. Here 's that calf in our room, pulling Tinkey's clothes all over the floor!"

"You just shut up!" said Tinkey, in a terrific "B-a-a-a!"

"Sho! Get out of my room!" shouted Bob.

"It is just as much my room as it is yours," cried Tinkey, angrily, dashing at Bob and driving him against the wall. "Oh! Oh! Papa! Come! He 's killing me!" yelled Bob.

"You big baby," sneered Tinkey, in calf language. "I have n't touched you!"

But while he spoke, Mr. Kirke and two hired men were coming up the stairs, and another chase ended in poor Tinkey's defeat.

But it was not until the neat, pretty bedroom of an hour previous looked as if there had been a whirlwind through it. Everything that could be knocked down was knocked down; everything that could be smashed was smashed; and from the dire confusion he had made, Tinkey was at last led out, and tied, very strongly this time, with these words of his father's to comfort him:

"I can't imagine," said Mr. Kirke, "what ails that calf; but I will send him to the butcher's in the morning!"

Tied up securely, the barn doors closed and fastened, Tinkey had plenty of time to think over his day's experience.

The butcher! Cold chills ran over him, as he thought of the long, bright knife he had seen many times in the hands of the butcher. Great tears ran down his face, and he was bitterly regretting his rash wish, when there was a soft whirr in the air, and the fairy car, drawn by butterflies, floated down upon a corn-bin. The wee woman stepped daintily down, and walked along the edge until she stood in front of poor, shivering Tinkey.

"So," she said, "you don't like it! You are tired already of being a calf!"

"Oh, yes! yes! Very tired! Please, dear Mrs. Fairy, make me a boy once more, and I will never, never be so foolish again!"

"I'm not so sure of that! You don't like Latin grammar."

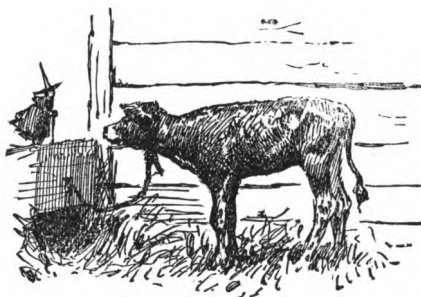
"But I like it better than being stoned and beaten and driven about. Oh, please, please don't go away and leave me a calf, dear Mrs. Fairy."

"Oh, ho! So you do believe I am a fairy?"

"I am sure of it."

"I will not be a cruel fairy, then. You shall have one more wish. Be a boy again!"

She waved her wand as she spoke, and a queer,



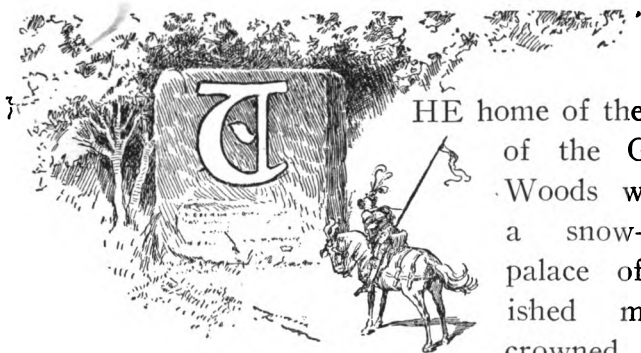
"SO YOU DO BELIEVE I AM A FAIRY?"

numb feeling crept over Tinkey. The barn faded away; the fairy car floated up out of sight; for a moment all was black, and then he found himself lying on the potato-sack, in the attic, with the Latin grammar still open before him.

With a joyful shout he sprang to his feet, very glad to be a boy once more!

THE KING OF THE GOLDEN WOODS

BY EVERETT MCNEIL



HE home of the King
of the Golden
Woods was in
a snow-white
palace of pol-
ished marble,
crowned by a

central dome of burnished gold incrustated with diamonds and rubies, and more beautiful than pen can tell. Around this palace rose a mighty wall of smooth black marble, forty feet thick and one hundred feet high. On top of this wall, at regular intervals, fifty great armed giants kept watch and ward, and each giant had two eyes, one in the center of the forehead and one in the back of the head, as all good sentinels should have. At the four points of the compass four

strong gates of bronze guarded the only openings through the wall. Around the wall, for seven leagues in every direction, grew the golden forest of the king, a marvelous wood wherein every tree and shrub was pure gold, from its topmost leaf to its bottommost root. In all the world there was not another forest like to this great wood of gold, and because of it the king was called the King of the Golden Woods.

Through the forest ran four roads to the four gates of the great wall surrounding the king's palace, and at the beginning of each road stood a huge marble block, cut deep with letters which read:

I, the King of the Golden Woods, have a daughter, whom I love, but no son. Therefore, before I die I would see my daughter happily wed to a man fit to be king over her heart and ruler over the Golden Woods. This road leads, through the Golden Woods, to the gate in the great wall surrounding the king's palace; and I, the king, invite all who would do their endeavor to win this priceless guerdon, a king's daughter and a king's throne, to journey hitherward. Let no one in whose heart dwells evil, or vaunting ambition, or cruel hardness, or sordid greediness, or boasting cowardice, attempt the journey; for I, the king, have beset the

road with manifold and deadly perils to all who have evil in their hearts or lives.

For three years had these marble blocks stood at the head of the four roads; yet the daughter of the King of the Golden Woods remained unwed. Not because there had been wanting men to attempt the journey through the woods of gold, for then, as now, men loved gold and beauty and power, and were ready to peril limb and life for their winning; but of all the hundreds who had ventured on the quest, and had bravely entered the golden forest, not one, prince or knight or peasant, had ever returned. Men thought of the horror of this, and the ardor of their hearts grew cold, and none longer cared to venture beneath the somber shadows of the trees of gold, not even to wed a king's daughter and to sit on a king's throne. The grass grew long on the roadways, and the moss began to creep over the white of the marble blocks.

Then came to the north road four brothers, sons of a powerful king whose kingdom was a year's journey from the realm of the King of the Golden Woods, and with the four brothers rode

their page, Yostuff. It had taken one year for the strange proclamation of the King of the Golden Woods to reach the ears of the four brothers; another year had gone ere they had won their father's consent to depart on a quest so distant and so uncertain; and the third year had been passed in making the journey.

Prince Odolph, the eldest of the four brothers, spurred his horse to the side of the huge block of marble, and, leaning forward, read aloud what was written thereon. Then the four brothers looked long and earnestly at the great wood of gold, sparkling in the bright light of the morning. Not a sound, not a movement, came from within its yellow depths, and its shadows hung darkly above the ground.

"I go forward," said Prince Odolph, "without fear, ready to peril all for the winning of so great a prize;" and seating himself firmly in the saddle, he dropped his vizor, gripped his spear-shaft strongly, and rode down the highway leading into the great wood of gold.

"I follow my brother, ready to share his peril, to fight for his safety, and, if it be God's will that he should perish, to continue the quest to the

end, fearing death less than defeat," said Prince Ormand, the second of the four brothers, riding close after Prince Odolph.

"I go forward until all of us be dead, or one of us a king. Ride on!" called Prince Armad, the third of the four brothers, touching spurs to his horse, and riding up close to the side of Prince Ormand.

"And I ride forth blithely to win a bride and a throne, or a grave," cried Prince Ized, the youngest of the brothers; and, like a happy school-boy, tossing high his lance into the air and catching it, he dug the spurs into his horse's flanks and galloped after his brothers.

Then said Yosuff the page: "For love of the brothers ride I into these weird woods, ready to face whatever comes, and caring not for death, so be it I can die like a man, leaving my honor bright and my sword clean."

No sound came to the ears of the five men as they entered the great woods, save the footfalls of their horses' hoofs and their own deep breathings. Above their heads the golden branches hung silent and motionless. Not a leaf trembled. Around them, like the pillars of a mighty temple, towered the great trunks of gold, and on the



" LIKE A HAPPY SCHOOL-BOY, TOSSING HIGH HIS LANCE INTO THE AIR "

ground the grass grew green. Soon the grandeur and the beauty of the scene began to work upon their souls. Their eyes sparkled and their faces flushed. Wealth, boundless wealth, was here—was theirs for the taking! There were no eyes to see, and the gold was everywhere, cumbering the earth with its massive weight.

Suddenly Prince Ized gave a shout, and drawing his sharp sword from its scabbard, cried aloud: "I vow I will have this wondrous branch in spite of all the demons of this marvelous woods!" And as he cried, he swung his sword and cut from a great tree a branch of gold.

At the stroke of the sword a shudder shook the mighty woods, the huge trunks began to sway and to shake until the earth trembled, and the branches lashed the air furiously, as if under the whip of a hurricane; yet there was not a breath of air stirring. Then, with a low, moaning sound, the giant trees began to move bodily through the ground, and swiftly, one by one, to come between Prince Ized and his brothers, until a solid wall of golden trunks surrounded him and held him prisoner.

A great whistling wind blew coldly through

the woods, and the trees slowly returned to their places; but Prince Ized had vanished.

The three brothers watched this awesome sight, sitting white and still in their saddles, numb with the terror of it; but Yosuff the page dug his spurs deep into his horse's sides and sprang to the rescue, only to dash vainly against the solid trunks of the intercepting trees.

When the moaning sound grew still, and the great trees again stood motionless, the three brothers continued their journey in silence, riding close together, and shuddering whenever a branch of gold chanced to touch the white plumes of their helmets.

For a league farther they rode thus, and then they came to a mighty river, rolling swiftly between rocky banks, its surface a fierce turmoil of foaming water and whirling cakes of ice. On the bank of the river sat four dwarfs. The instant their eyes caught sight of the four men, they jumped to their feet and shouted: "Haste! Haste! The wolves! The wolves!" Then each dwarf ran swiftly to a horseman's side, and begged to be taken up behind and carried across the river, where the wolves could not go.

The men heard the sound of many feet coming from behind, and, turning quickly, saw hundreds of great yellow wolves leaping fiercely toward them.

Prince Odolph and Prince Ormand and Yosuff the page each paused to swing a dwarf upon the horse behind him; but Prince Armad beat the being from his stirrup's side with the shaft of his longe lance, and, all heedless of his piteous cries, dashed away toward the river.

When Yosuff the page saw that the dwarf must perish unless helped, he quickly drew rein. "Come," said he, "I am light and my horse is strong. He can carry three. The wolves shall not eat you"; and he swung the dwarf up in front of himself.

Then a strange thing happened.

Prince Armad, not having been delayed by the dwarfs, nor his horse cumbered with the weight of one, reached the river first, and dashed into the water. Instantly, like a thing of life, the river leaped upon him, and man and horse vanished in a mighty rush of whirling ice and foam, down the course of the stream.

The three men drew rein, white with wonder and horror; for on the instant of the disappear-

ance of Prince Armad, the swift river sank into the ground, the dwarfs slipped from off the horses' backs and ran into the woods, and the wolves vanished like a thick yellow mist.

"Great must be the prize guarded thus fearfully," said Prince Odolph. "Come, brother, let us go forward and meet the end quickly"; and the two brothers, followed by Yosuff the page, rode swiftly on underneath the trees of gold.

Presently they came to a high hill, and when they had reached the top of the hill, they saw, in a beautiful valley surrounded by the high wall of black marble, the marvelous palace of the King of the Golden Woods. The great dome of burnished gold, with its glittering jewels, the grand palace of white marble, and the mighty surrounding woods of solid gold, all lay beneath their eyes. At this wondrous sight their bosoms swelled. To be lord of all these riches, King of the Golden Woods! What would not man do for splendors such as these?

Long the two brothers looked at the glittering dome of the palace and the surrounding woods of gold; and evil thoughts began to gather in their hearts, and each glanced darkly at the other.



"YOSUFF DISMOUNTED AND HELPED THE SUFFERER UPON THE BACK OF HIS HORSE"

"Brother," said Prince Odolph, roughly, "I am the elder. I will ride to the palace of the king alone. Remain thou here."

"Not so," answered Prince Ormand, shortly. "In this quest all are equal. I go to the king's palace or I die."

"Then die!" cried Prince Odolph, fiercely. "Two cannot win this prize. One of us must perish, and it were better that he should perish here." And the two brothers gripped their lances and charged each at the other. They met with a great crash, and the lances were shattered to the hands, but neither man was unhorsed. Then they drew their swords; but before either could strike a blow, with a roar as of the rushing together of many winds, a great whirling black smoke fell upon the two brothers and bore them swiftly away.

Yosuff the page sat on his horse alone. His heart was heavy, for he had loved the four brothers.

"Now I will go to their father, the king," he said; and bowing his head, he rode sadly down the hill.

When he came to the foot of the hill he found an old man lying by the roadside, moaning with



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"Now I will go to their father, the king," he said; and bowing his head, he rode sadly down the hill.

When he came to the foot of the hill he found an old man lying by the roadside, moaning with

the agony of a broken leg. Yosuff dismounted and helped the sufferer upon the back of his horse.

"To the palace," moaned the old man. "There is no help nearer."

"I will then bear you to the palace," answered Yosuff, thinking only of saving the old man's life. And mounting, and holding the old man in his arms so as to ease his pain, he rode to the gate in the great wall around the palace.

The instant he stopped before the gate, the giant sentinel on the top of the wall called with a loud voice, "Ho, the king has come!" and "Ho, the king has come!" repeated all the other giants, all around the wall. The great gate of bronze swung wide open, and there, ready to receive Yosuff the page, was the King of the Golden Woods and all his magnificent court; and back of the king, surrounded by a guard of men-at-arms, stood the four brothers in the midst of a great number of other men who had been unsuccessful.

"I crave thy mercy, O King, for this old man, who has received a grievous hurt," said Yosuff, quickly dismounting and bowing low at the feet of the king; "and I beg that he may be given into the hands of thy physicians. As for myself,

"THE TWO BROTHERS GRIPPED THEIR LANCES AND CHARGED EACH AT THE OTHER."



with thy permission, I will return to the land whence I came, for unhappily hath our enterprise ended for those for whose sake I journeyed hither."

But the king, bending forward, lifted Yosuff to his feet and said: "Arise! Henceforth thou art my son, and the heir to my kingdom; for thou hast proven thyself brave and noblehearted, even as a king should be. "But," said the king, pointing to the four brothers and the long row of stately men who stood waiting with bowed heads, "these men, who came hither seeking a great prize, and failed of the winning of it because of the evil in their hearts, shall be thy servants, and learn the worth of true nobility in thy service."

Then the king threw a chain of gold around the neck of the youth, and a purple robe over his shoulders, and led him amid great rejoicings into his palace.

Thus it came about that Yosuff the page, who entered the Golden Woods with a pure and kind heart, and seeking nothing, won all.

THE BALLAD of the BLACKSMITH'S SONS

BY MARY E. WILKINS

I

CLING, clang,— “Whoa, my bonny gray mare!
Whoa,”— cling, clang,— “my bay!
But the black and the sorrel must stay unshod,
While my two fair sons are away.”

II

While the blacksmith spake, his fair sons came,
And stood in the smithy door—
“Now where have ye been, my two fair sons,
For your father has missed ye sore?”

III

Then pleasantly spake the younger son,
With the eyes of dreamy blue:
“O Father, we ’ve been in a land as bright
As the glint o’ the morning dew!”



'CLING, CLANG, MY BONNY GRAY
'WHOA, MY BONNY GRAY
MARE!'

THE BALLAD OF THE BLACKSMITH'S SONS 43

IV

Then his brother twinkled his gay black eyes,
And he spake up merry and bold :
“Hey, father, we ’ve been in the fairy land,
Where the horses are shod wi’ gold !”

V

“An’ what did ye there in Fairy-land,
O my two fair sons, I pray ?”
“We shod for them, Father, their fairy steeds,
All in a month an’ a day.

VI

“An’, Father, we shod them wi’ virgin gold ;
Each nail had a diamond head ;
All the steeds were as white as the clear moonlight,
An’ in fields o’ lilies they fed.”

VII

“An’ what was the sum o’ the fairy hire,
O my two fair sons, I pray ?”
“Oh, a seed of a wonderful fairy flower,
They gave to us each for pay !”

VIII

“An’ what will ye do wi’ the seeds, fair sons ?”
“We will sow i’ the light, green spring,
An’ may be, a golden rose will toss,
Or a silver lily will swing.”

IX

“Now,”— cling, clang,— “whoa, my bonny gray mare!

Whoa,”— cling, clang,— “my bay!

An’ the sorrel an’ black, now my sons are back,
Can be shod”— cling, clang,— “to-day.”

X

Oh, the smith’s sons planted the fairy seeds,
When the light, green spring came round,
Through the sunlit hours, ’twixt the April showers,
In the best of the garden ground!

XI

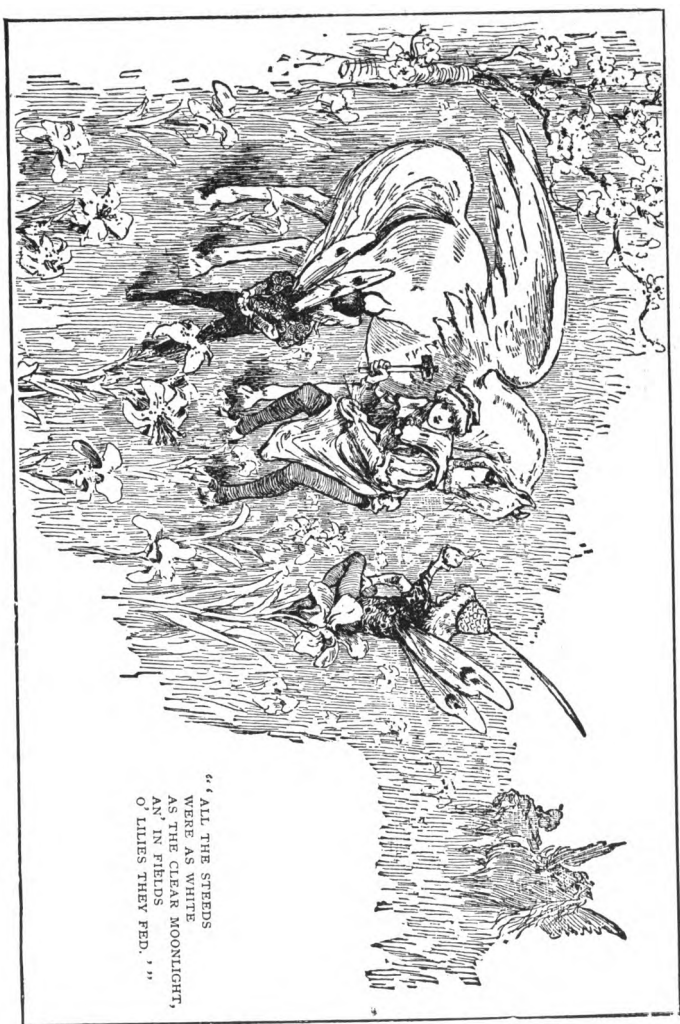
Then the white rains wove with the long light-beams,
Till a stalk, like a slim green flame,
Pierced the garden mold; a leaf unrolled:
And another beside it came.

XII

Then the brothers tended their fairy plants
Till they shot up, brave and tall,
And the leaves grew thick. “Now soon shall we pick
A rose like a golden ball;

XIII

“Or else, we shall see a lily, maybe,
With a bell o’ bright silver cast,”
They thought; and they cried with joy and pride,
When the blossom-buds shaped at last.



“ ALL THE STEEDS
WERE AS WHITE
AS THE CLEAR MOONLIGHT,
AND IN FIELDS
O’ LILIES THEY FED. ”



"‘NOW, HEYDAY!’ SHOUTED THE ELDER SON
AND HE DANCED IN THE GARDEN WALK."

XIV

"Now, heyday!" shouted the elder son,
And he danced in the garden walk,
"A hat I will buy, as a steeple high,
An' the neighbors will stare an' talk.

THE BALLAD OF THE BLACKSMITH'S SONS 47



“ ‘O JOY! IF I HOLD BUT MY FAIRY GOLD,
MY FATHER'S TOIL IS DONE!’ ”

XV

“Heyday! I will buy me a brave gold chain,
An' a waistcoat o' satin fine,
A ruff o' lace, an' a pony an' chaise,
An' a bottle o' red old wine!”

XVI

But his brother looked up in the blue spring sky,
And his yellow curls shone in the sun—
“O joy! If I hold but my fairy gold,
My father’s toil is done!

XVII

“He shall hammer no more with his tired old hands,
He shall shoe not the bay nor the gray;
But shall live as he please, an’ sit at his ease,
A-resting the livelong day.”

XVIII

Alas, and alas! When it came to pass
That the bud to a flower was grown,
It was pallid and green,—no blossom so mean
In the country-side was known.

XIX

Then angrily hurried the elder son,
And hustled his up by the root;
And it gave out a sound, as it left the ground,
Like the shriek of a fairy flute.

XX

But he flung it over the garden wall,
And he cried, with a scowling brow:
“No waistcoat fine, an’ no bottle o’ wine—
I have labored for naught, I trow!”

THE BALLAD OF THE BLACKSMITH'S SONS 49

XXI

"Now,"— cling, clang,— "whoa, my bonny gray mare!"

Cling, clang,— "whoa, my bay!"

But the sorrel and white must wait to-night,
For one son sulks all day."



4

"THEN ANGRILY HURRIED THE ELDER SON, AND HUSTLED HIS
UP BY THE ROOT."



**"LIKE A STAR FROM THE SKIES TO HIS DAZZLED EYES
WAS BLAZING A BULB OF GOLD!"**

XXII

But the blue-eyed son till the summer was done
Cared well for his fairy flower ;
He weeded and watered, and killed the grub
Would its delicate leaves devour.

THE BALLAD OF THE BLACKSMITH'S SONS 51

XXIII

But the frost came forth from the still blue North,
And one morning he found it dead;
The leaves were black in the white frost-light,
And the stalk was a shriveled shred.

XXIV

"Now, never a rose like a golden ball,
Nor a silver lily shall blow;
But never I'll mind, for I'm sure to find
More gold, if I work, I know."

XXV

Then he tenderly pulled up the fairy plant,
And, lo, in the frosty mold,
Like a star from the skies to his dazzled eyes,
Was blazing a bulb of gold!

XXVI

"Now,"— cling, clang,— "whoa, my bonny gray
mare!
Or gallop or trot, as ye may!
This happy old smith will shoe ye no more,
For he sits at his ease, all day!"

CASPERL

BY H. C. BUNNER

CASPERL was a wood-chopper, and the son of a wood-chopper, and although he was only eighteen when his father died, he was so strong and active, that he went on chopping and hauling wood for the whole neighborhood, and people said he did it quite as well as his father, while he was certainly a great deal more pleasant in his manner and much more willing to oblige others.

It was a poor country, however, for it was right in the heart of the Black Forest, and there were more witches and fairies and goblins there than healthy human beings. So Casperl scarcely made a living, for all he worked hard and rose up early in the morning, summer and winter. His friends often advised him to go to some better place, where he could earn more money; but he only shook his head and said that the place was good enough for him.

He never told any one, though, why he loved his poor hut in the depths of the dark forest, because it was a secret which he did not wish to share with strangers. For he had discovered, a mile or two from his home, in the very blackest part of the woods, an enchanted mountain. It was a high mountain, covered with trees and rocks and thick, tangled undergrowth, except at the very top, where there stood a castle surrounded by smooth, green lawns and beautiful gardens, which were always kept in the neatest possible order, although no gardener was ever seen.

This enchanted mountain had been under a spell for nearly two hundred years. The lovely Princess who lived there had once ruled the whole country. But a powerful and wicked magician disguised himself as a prince, and made love to her. At first the Princess loved her false suitor; but one day she found out that he was not what he pretended to be, and she told him to leave her and never to come near her again.

"For you are not a prince," she said. "You are an impostor, and I will never wed any but a true prince."

"Very well," said the magician, in a rage.

"You shall wait for your true prince, if there is such a thing as a true prince; and you shall marry no one till he comes."

And then the magician cast a spell upon the beautiful castle on the top of the mountain, and the terrible forest sprang up about it. Rocks rose up out of the earth and piled themselves in great heaps among the tree-trunks. Saplings and brush, and twisted, poisonous vines came to fill up every crack and crevice, so that no mortal man could possibly go to the summit, except by one path, which was purposely left clear. And in that path there was a gate that the strongest man could not open, it was so heavy. Farther up the mountain-slope, the trunk of a tree lay right across the way,—a magic tree, that no one could climb over or crawl under or cut through. And beyond the gate and the tree was a dragon with green eyes that frightened away every man that looked at it.

And there the beautiful Princess was doomed to live until the true prince should arrive and overcome these three obstacles.

Now, although none of the people in the forest, except Casperl, knew of the mountain or the Princess, the story had been told in many dis-

tant countries, and year after year young princes came from all parts of the earth to try to rescue the lovely captive and win her for a bride. But, one after the other, they all tried and failed,—the best of them could not so much as open the gate.

And so there the Princess remained, as the years went on. But she did not grow any older, or any less beautiful, for she was still waiting for the True Prince, and she believed that some day he would come.

This was what kept Casperl from leaving the Black Forest. He was sorry for the Princess, and he hoped some day to see her rescued and wedded to the True Prince.

Every evening, when his work was done, he would walk to the foot of the mountain, and sit down on a great stone, and look up to the top, where the Princess was walking in her garden. And as it was an enchanted mountain, he could see her clearly although she was so far away. Yes, he could see her face as well as though she were close by him, and he thought it was truly the loveliest face in the world.

There he would sit and sadly watch the princes who tried to climb the hill. There was scarcely

a day that some prince from a far country did not come to make the attempt. One after another, they would arrive with gorgeous trains of followers, mounted on fine horses, and dressed in costumes so magnificent that a plain cloth-of-gold suit looked shabby among them. They would look up to the mountain-top and see the Princess walking there, and they would praise her beauty so warmly that Casperl, when he heard them, felt sure he was quite right in thinking her the loveliest woman in the world.

But every prince had to make the trial by himself. That was one of the conditions which the magician made when he laid the spell upon the castle; although Casperl did not know it.

And each prince would throw off his cloak, and shoulder a silver or gold-handled ax, and fasten his sword by his side, and set out to climb the hill, and open the gate, and cut through the fallen tree, and slay the dragon, and wed the Princess.

Up he would go, bright and hopeful, and tug away at the gate until he found that he could do nothing with it, and then he would plunge into the tangled thickets of underbrush, and try his best to fight his way through to the summit.

But every one of them came back, after a while, with his fine clothes torn and his soft skin scratched, all tired and disheartened and worn out. And then he would look spitefully up at the mountain, and say he did n't care so much about wedding the Princess, after all; that she was only a common enchanted princess, just like any other enchanted princess, and really not worth so much trouble.

This would grieve Casperl, for he could n't help thinking that it was impossible that any other woman could be as lovely as *his* Princess. You see, he called her *his* Princess, because he took such an interest in her, and he did n't think there could be any harm in speaking of her in that way, just to himself. For he never supposed she could even know that there was such a humble creature as poor young Casperl, the wood-chopper, who sat at the foot of the hill and looked up at her.

And so the days went on, and the unlucky princes came and went, and Casperl watched them all. Sometimes he saw his Princess look down from over the castle parapets, and eagerly follow with her lovely eyes the struggles of some brave suitor through the thickets, until the poor Prince

gave up the job in despair. Then she would look sad and turn away. But generally she paid no attention to the attempts that were made to reach her. That kind of thing had been going on so long that she was quite used to it.

By and by, one summer evening, as Casperl sat watching, there came a little prince with a small train of attendants. He was rather undersized for a prince; he did n't look strong, and he did look as though he slept too much in the morning and too little at night. He slipped off his coat, however, and climbed up the road, and began to push and pull at the gate.

Casperl watched him carelessly for a while, and then, happening to look up, he saw that the Princess was gazing sadly down on the poor little Prince as he tugged and toiled.

And then a bold idea came to Casperl. Why should n't he help the Prince? He was young and strong; he had often thought that, if he were a prince, a gate like that should not keep him away from the Princess. Why, indeed, should he not give his strength to help to free the Princess? And he felt a great pity for the poor little Prince, too.

So he walked modestly up the hill and offered his services to the Prince.

"Your Royal Highness," he said, "I am only a wood-chopper ; but, if you please, I am a strong wood-chopper, and perhaps I can be of use to you."

"But why should you take the trouble to help me?" inquired the Prince. "What good will it do you?"

"Oh, well!" said Casperl, "it 's helping the Princess, too, don't you know?"

"No, I don't know," said the Prince. "However, you may try what you can do. Here, put your shoulder to this end of the gate, and I will stand right behind you."

Now, Casperl did not know that it was forbidden to any suitor to have help in his attempt to climb the hill. The Prince knew it, though, but he said to himself, "When I am through with this wood-chopper I will dismiss him, and no one will know anything about it. I can never lift this gate by myself. I will let him do it for me, and thus I shall get the Princess, and he will be just as well satisfied, for he is only a wood-chopper."



"COURAGE, YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS! SAID CASPERL.
'WE 'LL MOVE IT AFTER ALL.'"

So Casperl put his broad shoulder to the gate and pushed with all his might. It was very heavy, but after a while it began to move a little.

"Courage, your Royal Highness!" said Casperl. "We 'll move it, after all." But if he had looked over his shoulder, he would have seen that the little Prince was not pushing at all, but that he had put on his cloak, and was standing idly by, laughing to himself at the way he was making a wood-chopper do his work for him.

After a long struggle, the gate gave way, and swung open just wide enough to let them through. It was a close squeeze for the Prince; but Casperl held the gate open until he slipped through.

"Dear me," said the Prince, "you 're quite a strong fellow. You really were of some assistance to me. Let me see, I think the stories say something about a tree, or some such thing, farther up the road. As you are a wood-chopper, and as you have your ax with you, perhaps you might walk up a bit and see if you can't make yourself useful."

Casperl was quite willing, for he began to feel that he was doing something for the Princess,

and it pleased him to think that even a wood-chopper could do her a service.

So they walked up until they came to the tree. And then the Prince drew out his silver ax, and sharpened it carefully on the sole of his shoe, while Casperl picked up a stone and whetted his old iron ax, which was all he had.

"Now," said the Prince, "let 's see what we can do."

But he really did n't do anything. It was Casperl who swung his ax and chopped hard at the magic tree. Every blow made the chips fly; but the wood grew instantly over every cut, just as though he had been cutting into water.

For a little while the Prince amused himself by trying first to climb over the tree, and then to crawl under it. But he soon found that whichever way he went, the tree grew up or down so fast that he was shut off. Finally he gave it up, and went and lay down on his back on the grass, and watched Casperl working.

And Casperl worked hard. The tree grew fast; but he chopped faster. His forehead was wet and his arms were tired, but he worked away and made the chips fly in a cloud. He was too

busy to take the time to look over his shoulder, so he did not see the Prince lying on the grass. But every now and then he spoke cheerily, saying, "We'll do it, your Royal Highness!"

And he did it, in the end. After a long, long while, he got the better of the magic tree, for he chopped quicker than it could grow, and at last he had cut a gap right across the trunk.

The Prince jumped up from the grass and leaped nimbly through, and Casperl followed him slowly, and sadly, for he was tired, and it began to occur to him that the Prince had n't said anything about the Princess, which made him wonder if he were the True Prince, after all. "I'm afraid," he thought, "the Princess won't thank me if I bring her a prince who does n't love her. And it really is very strange that this Prince has n't said a word about her."

So he ventured to remark, very meekly:

"Your Royal Highness will be glad to see the Princess."

"Oh, no doubt," said the Prince.

"And the Princess will be very glad to see your Royal Highness," went on Casperl.

"Oh, of course!" said the Prince.

“And your Royal Highness will be very good to the Princess,” said Casperl further, by way of a hint.

“I think,” said the Prince, “that you are talking altogether too much about the Princess. I don’t believe I need you any more. Perhaps you would better go home. I ’m much obliged to you for your assistance. I can’t reward you just now, but if you will come to see me after I have married the Princess, I may be able to do something for you.”

Casperl turned away, somewhat disappointed, and was going down the hill, when the Prince called him back.

“Oh, by the way!” he said; “there ’s a dragon, I understand, a little farther on. Perhaps you ’d like to come along and see me kill him?”

Casperl thought he would like to see the Prince do something for the Princess, so he followed meekly on. Very soon they came to the top of the mountain, and saw the green lawns and beautiful gardens of the enchanted castle,—and there was the dragon waiting for them.

The dragon reared itself on its dreadful tail, and flapped its black wings; and its great green, shining, scaly body swelled and twisted, and it roared in a terrible way.

The little Prince drew his jeweled sword and walked slowly up to the monster. And then the great beast opened its red mouth and blew out one awful breath, that caught the Prince up as if he were a feather, and whisked him clear off the mountain and over the tops of the trees in the valley, and that was the last any one ever saw of him.

Then Casperl grasped his old ax and leaped forward to meet the dragon, never stopping to think how poor his weapon was. But all of a sudden the dragon vanished and disappeared and was gone, and there was no trace of it anywhere; but the beautiful Princess stood in its place and smiled and held out her white hand to Casperl.

"My Prince!" she said, "so you have come at last!"

"I beg your gracious Highness's pardon," said Casperl; "but I am no Prince."

"Oh, yes, you are!" said the Princess; "how did you come here, if you are not my True Prince? Did n't you come through the gate and across the tree, and have n't you driven the dragon away?"

"I only helped——" began Casperl.

"You did it all," said the Princess, "for I saw you. Please don't contradict a lady."

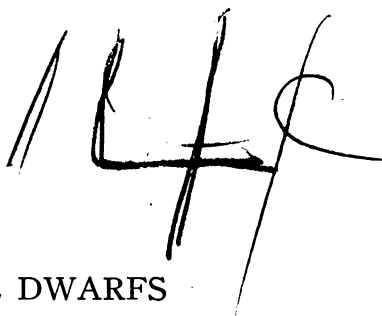
"But I don't see how I could——" Casperl began again.

"People who are helping others," said the Princess, "often have a strength beyond their own. But perhaps you did n't come here to help me, after all?"

"Oh, your gracious Highness," cried Casperl, "there 's nothing I would n't do to help you. But I 'm sure I 'm not a Prince."

"And I am sure you are," said the Princess, and she led him to a fountain near by, and when he looked at his reflection in the water, he saw that he was dressed more magnificently than any prince who ever yet had come to the enchanted mountain.

And just then the wedding-bells began to ring, and that is all I know of the fairy story, for Casperl and the Princess lived so happily ever after in the castle on top of the mountain, that they never came down to tell the rest of it.



THE TEN LITTLE DWARFS

From the French of Emile Souvestre

BY SOPHIE DORSEY

THE long winter evenings had set in, and William's farm-house was the scene of frequent gatherings of friends and relatives. After the day's work, the family were accustomed to assemble around the fireside, and neighbors joined them; for in the solitary valleys of the Vosges Mountains, dwellings are scattered and neighborship establishes a sort of relationship.

It is there, around the glowing flame of pine knots, that friendships are cemented; the sweet warmth of the fire, the joyous reunion, and the freedom of conversation lead to intimacies. Hearts freely open to hearts, and minds unite in a thousand projects, each inner life is thrown into a common stock, the outer one being cast off for the occasion, as a mask thrown aside.

Sometimes Cousin Prudence joined the evening party, in spite of the distance he had to come,

and then it was a real holiday at the farm; for this cousin is the cleverest "story teller" in the mountains; he not only knows all those the fathers have related, but also those told in books. He knows when all the old houses were built, and the histories of all the old families. He has learned the names of the moss-covered stones, which rise upon the hills like columns, or like altars; he is, in short, a living tradition of the country and its lore. And more than that, he is the Wise Man. He has learned to read hearts, and he rarely fails to discover the cause of any ill that may afflict them; others may know remedies for the infirmities of the body; but the old peasant treats infirmities of the soul, so the popular voice has bestowed on him the respected name of "Goodman Prudence."

It is the first time within the new year that he has appeared at the farm gatherings, and every one, at the sight of him, shouts for joy; they give him the very best place by the fireside, they form a circle around him, and William, the farmer, lights his pipe and seats himself right in front of him. The Goodman Prudence is then, first by one and then by another, informed of every piece of news about everything and everybody

in the neighborhood; he wishes to know how the crops turned out, if the last colt is thriving, how the poultry yard is flourishing; but all his inquiries, when addressed to the farmer's wife, formerly so cheerful, are answered slowly and in an uninterested manner; as if her thoughts were elsewhere; for the pretty Martha thinks often of the village where she grew up, regrets the dances under the Elms, the long walks in the fields with her young companions, when they laughed and plucked flowers from the hedges, the long chats in the square and at the fountain. So it often happens that Martha sits with her arms listlessly hanging by her side, her pretty head drooping, and her mind occupied with the past. This very evening, whilst the other women worked, she sat before her spinning-wheel, which did not turn, her distaff, filled with flax, hanging idly to her girdle, her fingers playing abstractedly with the thread lying over her knees.

The Goodman Prudence had observed all this from the corner of his eye, without saying anything, for he knew that good counsel is like bitter medicine to children, and that the manner and the time for administering it must be well chosen to make it acceptable.

In the meantime the family and neighbors surrounded him, and cried out, "Goodman Prudence, a story, a story"; the old peasant smiled and cast a glance toward Martha, still sitting listless.

"That is to say," said he, "that one must pay for his welcome—well, you shall have your way, my good folks. The last time I told you of the olden times, when the Pagan armies ravaged our mountains; that was a story for the men; now I shall speak, if it please you, to the women and children; every one must have his day. We told then, of Caesar, now I will tell of Mother Water Green."

Everybody burst into a great laugh at this, and all quickly settled themselves to hear. William, the farmer, relighted his pipe, and the Goodman Prudence commenced:

This story, my dears, is not a nursery tale; you can read it in the Almanac, with other true tales, for it happened to our grandmother Charlotte, whom William knew, and who was a wonderfully reliable woman. Grandmother Charlotte was also fair in her time, though you would hardly credit it, when looking at her gray locks and her hooked nose always trying to meet her chin, but

those of her own age said there was no better-looking or gayer girl anywhere than she, when she was young. Unfortunately, Charlotte was left alone with her father, in charge of a large farm, much more productive of debts than of income, and work so constantly succeeded work that the poor girl, who was not made for so much care, often fell into despair and took to doing nothing, since she could not find the way to do everything.

One day, whilst sitting before the door, her hands under her apron, like a lady with frost-bitten fingers, she commenced to say, in a low tone: "God forgive, but the task which has been laid upon me is not such as a Christian can bear, and it is a great pity that I am tormented at my age with so many cares; why, if I was more industrious than the sun, quicker than water, and stronger than fire, I could not do all the work of this family. Ah! why is not good fairy Water Green still in the world? or, why was n't she invited to my christening, and asked to stand god-mother? If she could hear me, and would help me, perhaps we should get relief from our troubles,—I from my care, and my father from his debts."

"Be satisfied, then, here I am," interrupted a voice, and Charlotte saw before her Mother Water Green supporting herself on her staff of holly.

At first, the young girl was frightened, for the fairy was dressed very differently from the costume of the country; she was clad entirely in a frog skin, the head of which served as a hood, and she herself was so ugly, old, and wrinkled, that if she had been worth a million, no one would have been bold enough to marry her. Nevertheless, Charlotte recovered herself quickly enough to ask of the fairy, with a voice rather tremulous but very polite, what she could do to serve her.

"It is I who have come to serve you," replied the old woman. "I have heard your complaints, and have brought something to relieve you."

"Are you really in earnest, Good Mother?" cried Charlotte, who quickly, in her joy, lost her fear of her visitor. "Do you come to give me a piece of your rod, by which I can make my work easy?"

"Better than that," replied Mother Water Green. "I will bring you ten little workmen, who will do all that you order."

"Where are they?" cried the young girl.

"I will show them to you." The old woman opened her cloak, and out popped ten little dwarfs of different heights.

The two first were very short, but quite stout. "These," said she, "are the strongest; they will help you in every work, and they make up in strength what they want in dexterity; those that you see follow them, are taller and more adroit, they know how to milk, to handle the distaff, and to take hold of all housework; their brothers, whose tall figures you see, are remarkably clever in the use of the needle, and that is the reason I have clapped little thimbles of brass upon their heads instead of caps; here are two others who are not so smart, and who wear a ring for a girdle, they cannot do much more than aid in the general housework, as also these last little ones, and they are to be estimated by their willingness to do what they can—all ten of them appear to you, I warrant, very insignificant fellows, and not worth much, but you shall see them at work, and then you can judge."

At these words the little old woman made a sign, and the ten dwarfs sprang forward. Charlotte saw them execute successively the rudest

and the most delicate work, lend themselves to everything, prepare everything, and accomplish everything. Amazed, she uttered a cry of delight, and stretching her arms toward the fairy, "Ah! Mother Water Green," she cried, "lend me these ten brave workers, and I will ask nothing more."

"I will do more than that," replied the fairy, "I will give them to you, only as you cannot carry them about with you without being accused of witchcraft, I will order each of them to make himself very little and to hide in your ten fingers." One word, and this was done.

"You now know what a treasure you possess," continued Mother Water Green, "and all depends upon the use you make of it. If you do not know how to control your little servants, if you allow them to grow clumsy by idleness, you will gain nothing from my gift, but if you direct them properly, and for fear that they should pass their time in napping, never allow your fingers any repose, you will find the work, which now so frightens you, done as if by magic."

The fairy spoke truly, and our grandmother, who followed her advice, not only cleared, at last, the farm from all its difficulties, but made

money enough, after marrying happily, to raise eight children comfortably and respectably. Since that time it has become a tradition amongst us, that all the women in the family have inherited Mother Water Green's workers, for whenever they stir themselves these little laborers go to work, and we greatly profit thereby, and it is a common saying with us, that in the movement of the housewife's ten fingers lies all the prosperity, all the joy, and all the happiness of the family.

In speaking these last words the Goodman Prudence turned towards Martha—the young wife blushed, lowered her eyes and picked up her distaff.

Farmer William and his cousin exchanged a glance—all the family silently reflected upon the story, each one seeking to penetrate its full meaning, and apply the lesson to him or herself. But the farmer's pretty wife had already understood to whom it was addressed, for her face had become gay, the spinning-wheel turned rapidly; and the flax soon disappeared from the distaff.



"THIS IS GIANT THUNDER BONES"

GIANT THUNDER BONES

BY STELLA DOUGHTY

I

THIS is Giant Thunder Bones.

II

This is the Dwarf with anxious looks
Who guarded the castle and kept the books
For Giant Thunder Bones.



III

This is the Gnome with beard so gray
Who digged for gems all night and day
To please the Dwarf with anxious looks
Who guarded the castle and kept the books
For Giant Thunder Bones.



IV

This is the Princess of Wandeltreg
Who, while playing a game of Mumblepeg,
Was caught by the Gnome with beard so gray
Who digged for gems all night and day



To please the Dwarf with anxious looks
Who guarded the castle and kept the books
For Giant Thunder Bones.

V

This the Prince so brave and so grand



Who sailed over
sea and rode
over land

Till he found the
Princess of Wan-
deltreg

Who, while play-
ing a game of
Mumblepeg,

Was caught by the
Gnome with
beard so gray

Who dugged for
gems all night
and day

To please the
Dwarf with anx-
ious looks

Who guarded the
castle and kept
the books

For Giant Thunder
Bones.

VI

This is the Goblin with fingers so frail
Who hopped with ease over mountain and dale
As he chased the Prince so brave and so grand
Who sailed over sea and rode over land



Till he found the Princess of Wandeltreg
Who, while playing a game of Mumblepeg,
Was caught by the Gnome with beard so gray
Who digged for gems all night and day
To please the Dwarf with anxious looks
Who guarded the castle and kept the books
For Giant Thunder Bones.

VII

This is the Witch with Broomstick and Cat
Who sputtered and snarled and shook her tall hat
When she missed the Goblin with fingers so frail
Who hopped with ease over mountain and dale
As he chased the Prince so brave and so grand



Who sailed over sea and rode over land
Till he found the Princess of Wandeltreg
Who, while playing a game of Mumblepeg,
Was caught by the Gnome with beard so gray
Who digged for gems all night and day

To please the Dwarf with anxious looks
Who guarded the castle and kept the books
For Giant Thunder Bones.



VIII

And last comes the Kobold who slept while 't was light
And did all the housework in the dead of the night
To worry the Witch with Broomstick and Cat
Who sputtered and snarled and shook her tall hat
When she missed the Goblin with fingers so frail
Who hopped with ease over mountain and dale



As he chased the Prince so brave and so grand
Who sailed over sea and rode over land
Till he found the Princess of Wandeltreg
Who, while playing a game of Mumblepeg,
Was caught by the Gnome with beard so gray
Who dugged for gems all night and day
To please the Dwarf with anxious looks
Who guarded the castle and kept the books
For Giant Thunder Bones.



FINIS

BY
STELLA DOUGHTY

WONDERING TOM

BY MARY MAPES DODGE

LONG, long ago, in a great city whose name is forgotten, situated on a river that ran dry in the days of Cinderella, there lived a certain boy, the only son of a poor widow. He had such a fine form and pleasant face that one day, as he loitered on his mother's door-step, the King stopped on the street to look at him.

"Who is that boy?" asked his Majesty of his Prime Minister.

This question brought the entire royal procession to a stand.

The Prime Minister did not know, so he asked the Lord of the Exchequer. The Lord of the Exchequer asked the High Chamberlain; the High Chamberlain asked the Master of the

Horse; the Master of the Horse asked the Court Physician; the Court Physician asked the Royal Rat-catcher; the Royal Rat-catcher asked the Chief-Cook-and-Bottle-Washer, and the Chief-Cook-and-Bottle-Washer asked a little girl named Wisk. Little Wisk told him the boy's name was Wondering Tom.

"So, ho!" said the Chief-Cook-and-Bottle-Washer, telling the Royal Rat-catcher. "So, ho!" said the Royal Rat-catcher, passing on the news; and it traveled in that way until, finally, the Prime Minister, bowing low to the King, said:

"May it please your most tremendous Majesty, it's Wondering Tom."

"Tell him to come here!" said the King to the Prime Minister. "Tell him to come here!" was repeated to the next in rank; and again his words traveled through the Lord of the Exchequer, the High Chamberlain, the Master of the Horse, the Court Physician, the Royal Rat-catcher, and the Chief-Cook-and-Bottle-Washer, until they reached little Wisk, who called out:

"O, Tom! the King wants to speak with you."

"With me!" exclaimed Tom, never budging. "Why?"

"I don't know," returned little Wisk, "but you must go at once."

"*Why?*" cried Tom.

"O, Tom! Tom! they 're going to kill you," she cried, in an agony.

"WHY?" screamed Tom, staring in the wildest astonishment.

Surely enough, the Master of Ceremonies had ordered forth an executioner with a bow-string. In that city, any man, woman, or child who disregarded the King's slightest wish was instantly put to death.

The man approached Tom. Another second, and the bow-string would have done its work; but the King held up his royal hand in token of pardon, and beckoned Tom to draw near.

"Whatever in all this world can his Majesty want with me?" pondered the bewildered boy, moving very slowly toward the monarch.

"Well!" said his Majesty, scowling. "So you are here! Why do they call you Wondering Tom?"

"ME, your Majesty?" faltered Tom. "I—I—don't know."

"You don't know? (Most remarkable boy, this!) And what were you doing, sir, when we sent for you?"

"Nothing, your Majesty. I was only wondering whether——"

"Ah, I see. You take your life out in wondering. A fine, strong fellow like you has no right to be idling in his mother's door-way. A pretty kingdom we should have if all our subjects were like this! You may go."

"He has a good face," continued the King, turning to his Prime Minister, "but he 'll never amount to anything."

"Ah, exactly so," said the Prime Minister. "Exactly so," echoed the Lord of the Exchequer, and "exactly so," sighed the Chief-Cook-and-Bottle-Washer at last, as the royal procession passed on.

Tom heard it all.

"Now, how do they know that?" he muttered, scratching his head as he lounged back to the doorstep. "Why in the world do they think I 'll never amount to anything?"

In the door-way he fell to thinking of little Wisk.

"What a very nice girl she is! I wonder if she 'd play with me if I asked her,—but I can't ask her. I do wonder what makes me so afraid to talk to Wisk!"

Meantime, little Wisk, who lived in the next house, watched him slyly.

"Tom!" she called out at last, swaying herself lithely round and round her wooden door-post, "the blackberries are ripe."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Tom.

"Yes, I do. And, Tom, there are bushels of them in the woods just outside of the city-gates!"

"Oh!" answered Tom, "I wonder if there are!"

"I *know* it," said little Wisk, decidedly, "and I 'm going to get some."

"Dear me!" thought Tom, "I wonder if she 'd like to have me go with her. Wisk!"

"What, Tom?"

"Oh, nothing," said the frightened fellow, suddenly changing his mind, "I was only wondering whether it is going to rain or not."

"Rain? Of course not," laughed little Wisk, running off to join a group of children going toward the north city-gate; "but even if it should rain, what matter?"

"Oh," thought Tom, "she 's really gone for blackberries! I wondered what she had that little kettle on her arm for. Pshaw! Why did n't I tell her that I 'd like to go too?"

Just then his mother came to the door, clapping a wet ruffle between her hands. She was a clear-starcher.

"Tom, Tom! why *don't* you set about something? There 's plenty to do, indoors and out, if you 'd only think so."

"Yes, ma'am," said Tom, wondering whether or not he was going to have a scolding.

"But you look pale, my pet; go and play, do. One don't often have such a perfect day as this (and such splendid drying, too!). If I were you, I 'd make the most of it;" and the mother went back into her bare entry, still clapping the ruffle.

"I do wonder how I can make the most of it," asked Tom of himself, over and over again, as he sauntered off.

He did n't dare to go toward the north gate of the city, because he could n't decide what he should say if he should meet little Wisk; so he turned toward the south.

"Shall I go back, I wonder, or keep on?" thought Tom, as he found himself going farther from the door-step and nearer to the great city-wall, until at last the southern gate was reached. Following the dusty highway leading from the city, he came to pleasant fields. Then, after

wading a while through the sunlit grain, he followed a shady brook and entered the wood.

"It 's pleasant here," he thought. "I wonder why mother did n't get a cottage out here in the country instead of living in the noisy city."

"Could n't," croaked a voice nearby.

Tom started. There was nobody near but frogs and crickets. Besides, as he had not spoken aloud, of course it could not be in answer to him. Still, he wondered what in the world the voice could be, and why it sounded like "could n't."

"It certainly did sound so. May be she could n't, after all," thought Tom; "but *why* could n't she, I wonder?"

"No-one-to-help," said something, as it jumped with a splash into the water.

"I do wonder what that was!" exclaimed Tom, aloud; "there 's nobody here, that 's certain. Oh, it must have been a toad! Queer, though, how very much it sounded like 'no-one-to-help!' Poor mother! I don't help her much, I know. Pshaw! what if I *do* love her, I 'm not the least bit of use, for I never know what to start about doing. What in all botheration makes me so lazy! Heigh-ho!" and Tom threw himself upon the grass, an image of despair. "I sha' n't ever

amount to anything, the King said. Now, what *did* he mean by that?"

"Dilly, dally!" said another mysterious voice, speaking far up among the branches overhead.

Tom was getting used to it. He just lifted his eyebrows a little and wondered what bird that was. In a moment he found himself puzzling over the strange words.

"'Dilly, dally,' it said, I declare. Oh dear! It 's too bad to have to hear such things all the time. And then, there 's the King's ugly speech; a fellow ain't going to stand everything!"

He was crying at last. Yes, his tears were dropping one by one upon the green turf. He rested upon his elbows, holding his face between his hands; and, although he felt very wretched, he could n't help wondering whether the grass in his shadow would n't think it was night and that his tears were dew-drops.

Suddenly his hat, which had tumbled from his head and now lay near him, began to twitch.

"Pshaw!" sobbed Tom, "what 's coming now, I wonder?"

"I am," said a piping voice.

"Where are you?" he asked, trembling.

"Here. Under your hat. Lift it off."

While Tom was wondering whether to obey or not, the hat fell over, and out came a fairy, all shining with green and gold,—a funny little creature with a wide mouth, but her eyes were like diamonds.

“What are you crying for, Master Tom?” asked the fairy.

“So she knows my name!” thought the puzzled youth; “well, that ’s queerer than anything! I ’ve always heard that these woods were full of fairies; but I never saw one before. I wonder why I ’m not more frightened.”

“Did you hear me?” piped the little visitor.

“Did you speak? O—yes—ma’am—certainly, I heard plain enough.”

“Well, what troubles you?”

He looked sharply at the little lady. Yes, she had a kind face. He would tell her all.

“I wonder what your name is?” he said, by way of a beginning.

“It ’s Kumtoothepoynt,” said the fairy. “Be quick! I can’t stay long.”

“Why?” asked Tom, quite astonished.

“Because I cannot. That ’s enough. If you wish me to help you, you must be quick and tell me your trouble.”

"Oh!" said Tom, wondering where to begin.

"Are you lame? Are you sick? Are you blind, deaf, or dumb?" she asked, briskly.

"Oh no," he replied, "nothing like that. Only I don't know what to make of things. Everything in this world puzzle me so, and I can't ever make up my mind what to do."

"Well," said Kumtoothepoynt, kindly, "perhaps I can help you a little."

"Can you?" he exclaimed. "Now I wonder how in the world such a little mite as you ever——"

"Don't wonder so much," squeaked the fairy, impatiently, "but ask me promptly what I can do."

"I 'm going to," said Tom.

"Going to!" she echoed. "What miserable creatures these mortals are! How could we ever get our gossamers spun if we always were going to do a thing, and never doing it! Now listen. I 'm a very wise fairy, if I *am* small; I can tell you how to accomplish anything you please. Don't you want to be good, famous, and rich?"

"Certainly I do," answered Tom, with a start.

"Very well," she responded, quite pleased. "If you always knew your own mind as decidedly as

that, they would n't call you 'Wondering Tom.' It's an ugly name, Master Mortal. If I were you (may Titania pardon the dreadful supposition!)—if I were you I'd wonder less and work more."

"I wonder if I could n't!" said Tom, half convinced.

"There you go again!" screeched the fairy, stamping her tiny foot. "You're not worth talking to. I shall leave you."

"She's fading away," cried Tom. "O fairy, good fairy, please come back! You promised to tell me how to become good and famous and rich!"

Once more she stood before him, looking brighter and fresher than ever.

"You're a noisy mortal," she said, nodding pleasantly to Tom. "I thought for an instant that it was thundering, but it was only you, calling. I've a very little while to stay, but you shall have one more chance of obtaining everything you wish. Now, sir, be careful! I'll answer you any three questions you may choose to put to me," and Kumtoothepoynt sat down on a toadstool, and looked very profound.

"Only three?" asked Tom, anxiously.

"Only three."

"Why can't you give me a dozen? There 's so much that one wishes to know in this world."

"Because I cannot," said the fairy, firmly.

"But it 's so hard to put everything into such a few questions! I don't know what in the world to decide upon. What do *you* think I ought to ask?"

"Consult the dearest wishes of your heart," said Kumtoothepoynt, "for there is the truest wisdom."

"Ah, well. Let me think," pursued Tom, with great deliberation. "I want to be wise, of course, and good, and very rich,—and I want mother to be the same,—and, good fairy, if you would n't mind it, little Wisk to be the same too. And dear me!—it 's so hard to put everything in such a few questions—let me see. First, I suppose I ought to learn how to become immensely rich, right off, and then I can give mother and Wisk everything they want; so, good Kumtoothepoynt, here 's my first question, How can I grow rich, *very* rich, in—in one week?"

The fairy shook her head.

"I would answer you, Master Tom, with great pleasure," she said, but this is number FOUR. You have already asked your three questions;"

and she turned into a green frog and jumped away, chuckling.

Tom rubbed his eyes and sat up straight. Had he been dreaming?

"I 'm a fool!" he cried.

All the trees nodded, and their branches seemed to be having great fun among themselves.

"A *big* fool!" he insisted.

The leaves fairly tittered.

"Did n't old Katy, the apple-woman, call me a goose only this morning?" he continued, growing very angry with himself.

"Katy did," assented a voice from among the bushes.

"Katy did n't!" contradicted another.

"Katy did!"

"Katy did n't!"

Tom laughed bitterly.

"Ha! ha! Fight it out among yourselves, old fellows. I may have been asleep; but, anyhow, I 'm no fool!"

"Ooo—!" echoed a solemn voice above him.

Tom looked up, and in the hollow of an old tree he saw a great blinking owl.

"Hallo! old Goggle-eyes! You 're having something to say, too, are you?"

The owl shifted her position, and stared at him an instant. Then, as if the sight of such a ridiculous fellow was too much for her, she shut her eyes with a loud "T'whit!" that made Tom jump.

All these things set the poor boy to thinking in earnest. The words of Kumtoothepoynt were ringing in his ears, "*If I were you, I'd wonder less and work more.*" Going back through the wood across the brook, and over the lots, he pondered over the day's events, and the result of all his pondering was that, as he entered the city gate, he snapped his fingers, saying, "The King's words shall never come true! Wondering Tom is going to work at last!"

THREE years passed away.

"Little Wisk" grew to be quite a tall girl; but nobody thought of calling her by any other name. She was so little and quick, so rosy, fresh, and sparkling, and so tender and true withal, that she was Little Wisk as a matter of course.

One chilly November afternoon she missed old Katy, the apple-woman, from her accustomed place at the street corner.

"She must be sick," thought little Wisk. "Perhaps she has no one to help her." .

With some persons, to think is to act. Wisk stepped into a neighboring cobbler's shop.

"Mr. Wacksend, do you know where the old apple-woman lives?"

"No," said the cobbler, gruffly. "Shut the door when you go out."

Little Wisk looked at him as he sat upon his bench, pegging away at his work.

"Poor man!" she said to herself, "pushing the awl through that thick leather makes him press his lips tight together, and I suppose pressing his lips so tight, day after day, makes him cross. I 'll try the butcher."

She ran into the next shop.

"Mr. Butcher, do you know where the old apple-woman lives?"

"Well," returned the butcher, pausing to wipe his cleaver on his sleeve, "she don't exactly *live* anywhere. But, as the poor thing has neither kith nor kin to help her, why, for the past year or so I've just let her tumble herself in under a shed in my back-yard. She's got an old chopping-bench for a table, and a pile of straw for a bed, that's all her housekeeping."

"And don't she have anything to eat but apples?" asked Wisk, much distressed.

"Bless your simple heart!" said the butcher, laughing, "she can't afford to eat her apples. No, no. She keeps the breath in her body mostly with black bread and scraps."

"Scraps?"

"Yes, meat-scraps. I save 'em for her out of the trimmin's. But what 's wantin' of her so particular? Did you come to invite her to court?"

"I 'd like to see her for a moment," said Wisk, shrinking from his coarse laugh.

"Well," answered the butcher, beginning to chop again, "the surest way of seeing her is to go to the corner and buy an apple."

"But she is n't there."

"Not there? That 's uncommon. Well" (pointing back over his shoulder with his cleaver), "go down the alley here, alongside the shop; steer clear of old Beppo in his kennel, he's ugly sometimes; then go past the pigsties and the skin-heaps, and cross over by the cattle-stalls; and right back of them, a little beyond, is the shed. May be she 's lying there sick; like enough, poor thing!"

Little Wisk followed the directions, as she picked her way carefully through the great, bleak cattle-yard, thinking, as she went, that killing

lambs did n't always make a man so very wicked, after all.

She found the old woman, moaning and bent nearly double with rheumatism.

"What can I do for you, Goody?"

"Bless your bright eyes! Did you come to see poor old Katy? *Ough ah-h!* the pain 's killing me, child! Oh, the Lord save us, *ough ah!*"

"It 's too cold and damp for you in here, I 'm sure."

"Ah, yes, dearie dear,—*ough, ough!*—cold and wet enough!"

"This old rusty stove would be nice if you had a fire in it, Goody."

"Oh, the stove, dearie! The good gentleman in the shop put it in here for me last winter. He 's kept me in meat-scrap, too. O—o—o (it catches me that way often, child). But, alack! I have n't a chip nor a shaving to make a bit of a fire. *Oh! oh!* (the worst 's in this shoulder, dearie, and 'cross the back and into this 'ere knee). Yes, cold and wet enough, so it is. *Ough!* No use s'arching out there, you won't find nothing. Not a waste splinter of wood left after *my* raking and scraping till I was too sick to stand up, I 'll be bound."

"I do wish I had money to buy you some,

Goody," said Wisk. "I sha' n't have another silver-piece till my next birthday, but you shall have that, I promise you."

"Blessings on you for saying it, dearie; but old Katy won't never last till then. What with cold and hunger (the meat on the nail there 's no use, you see, if I can't cook it), and this 'ere *ough—ah!*—this 'ere dreadful rheumatiz, I can't hold out much longer."

Suddenly, a thought came to Wisk.

"Oh, Katy!" she exclaimed, and off she ran, past the cattle-sheds, the skin-heaps, the pig-sties, the dog-kennel, down the alley, up the street, and round the corner till she came to a carpenter's shop—

"Tom," she said, hurrying in, quite out of breath, and addressing a great strong boy who was working there, "won't you give me some shavings and chips?"

"Certainly," said Tom, straightway beginning to scrape together a big pile. "What shall we put them in?"

"Into my apron. They 're for poor Katy, the apple-woman. She lives in an old shed in Slorter's cattle-yard. She 's sick, Tom, and she has n't a thing to make a fire with."

"Oh, if that 's it," said Tom, "we must get her

up a cart-load of waste stuff, if the boss is willing."

The boss spoke up.

"Help yourself, Tom. You 're the steadiest lad in the shop, and you 've never asked me a favor before. Help yourself. Take along all those odds and ends in the corner yonder. Chips and shavings soon burn up."

"Much obliged to you, sir," said Tom; and he added in a lower tone to Wisk, "I 'll load up and take 'em 'round to her as soon as I 've done my work. You can carry your apronful now."

Wisk held up the corners of her apron while Tom filled it, laughing to see how she lifted her pretty chin so that he might put in a "whole lot" as she called it.

"There!" he exclaimed at last, "that 's as much as you can manage."

"Thank you, Tom! Oh, how kind you are!" and she started at once.

"Wisk!"

He had followed her to the door. When she turned back, in answer to his call, he tried to speak to her, but coughed instead.

"Did you want me, Tom?" she asked, demurely.

"Yes, Wisk. I—I—wanted to say that—that I ——"

"Why, what a cough you have, Tom! It 's from working so much in this windy shop. Oh, Tom, I 've just thought! If Katy had a door to her shed and a bench with a back to it, she 'd be *so* comfortable."

"She shall have both," said Tom. "I 'll do it this very evening. It 's full moon."

"Oh, you dear, blessed Tom! Good-bye!"

"Wisk!"

But she was already running down the street. Tom turned back slowly. I think he was wondering, though he had nearly conquered that old habit. But it is so difficult, sometimes, to say just what we feel to those we like very much!

"First the shavings, then the chips," sang Wisk's happy heart, as she hurried along; "first the shavings, and then the chips, and then a spark from old Katy's tinder-box, and sha' n't we have a beautiful blaze?"

That night, the one-eyed dog in the butcher's yard had a hard time of it. There was the moon to be barked at; the pigs to be barked at; the sheep, the oxen, and the lambs to be barked at every time they moved in their stalls. The skin-

heap, too, required a constant barking to keep it from stirring while the rats were burrowing beneath. And then there was the strange lad to be barked at, coming in twice, as he did, with a hand-cart heaped high with chips, shavings and blocks, and again coming back with planks, hammer and saw. And the sudden smoke from the sick woman's fire; ah, how it bothered old Beppo!

He had lived long in the yard, and remembered well how the high chimney had stood there for years and years,—all that was left of a burned-down factory,—and how the shed had been built up around it as if to keep it from tumbling. For months past it had been a quiet, well-behaved chimney; but now to see smoke rushing out of it at such a rate, bound straight for that aggravating moon, was really too much to stand. So Beppo barked and barked; and Tom hammered and hammered; and old Katy, warm at last, curled herself up in the straw, saying over and over again, "How nice it will be! How nice it will be!"

TIME passed on. One day, the King and his court came riding down that same street again.

Suddenly his Majesty, grown older now, halted before a carpenter's shop and asked:

"Who is that busy fellow, yonder?"

"Where, your most prodigious Majesty?" asked the Prime Minister in return.

"In the shop. He works with a will, that fellow. I must let him build the royal ships."

"The royal ships!" echoed the Prime Minister, "your most preposterous Majesty; why, that is a fortune for any man!"

"I know it. Why not?" said the King. "What is his name?"

The Prime Minister could not say. And again, as on that day long ago, the question traveled through the grandees of the court, until it reached the Chief-Cook-and-Bottle-Washer, and the Chief-Cook-and-Bottle-Washer asked a pretty young woman named Wisk, who chanced to be coming out of the shop.

"He 's a master-builder," replied Wisk, blushing.

"But what 's his name?" repeated the Chief-Cook-and-Bottle-Washer.

"He used to be called Wondering Tom," she answered; "but now he 's Thomas Reddy."

"Thomas Reddy!" shouted the Chief-Cook-

and-Bottle-Washer. "Thomas Reddy!" cried the Royal Rat-catcher.

And, in fact, "Thomas Reddy" was called so often and so loudly along the line before it reached the only officer who could venture to speak to



the King, that the master-builder threw down his tools and came out of the shop.

"O, Tom! the King wants to speak with you again!" said Wisk.

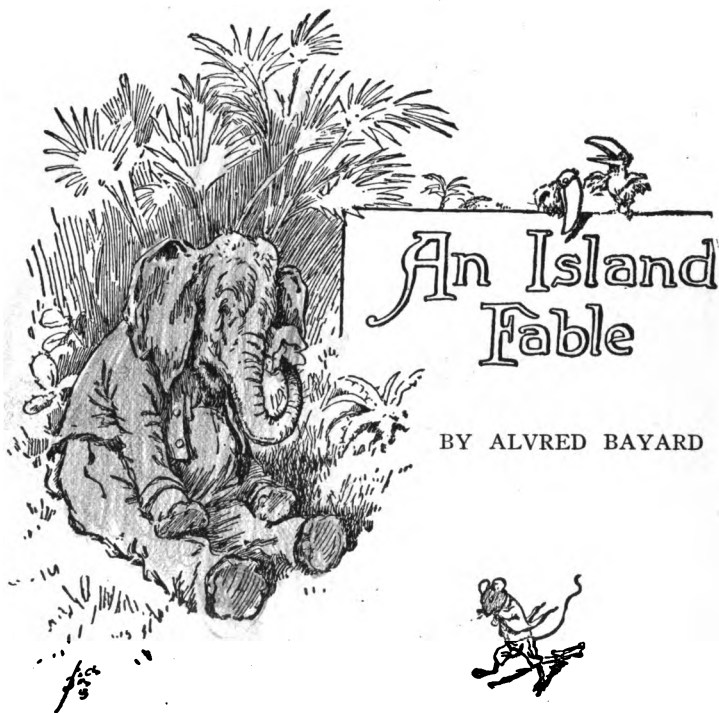
They took each other by the hand, and together walked toward his Majesty.

"Behold!" said the King, "we have found the finest young workman in our realms! Let preparations be made at once for proclaiming him Royal Ship-builder! What do they call you, young man? I've lost the name."

"Thomas Reddy, your Majesty," he answered, his eyes sparkling with grateful joy.

"And who are *you*, my pretty one?"

"Oh, I'm his wife," said the smiling Wisk.



THE Mouse and the Elephant lived at ease
On the island of Where-and-Why.
But the Elephant mourned,
In his ponderous way,
That he was so wide and high.



The Mouse, on the other hand, squeaked with grief,
And crossed his beautiful eyes,
Lamenting that he
Was so very small—
Each envied the other his size.



One night, when the moon was over the left
And the wind was sounding his trump,
A Fairy came forth
From her home in a cleft,
With a hop, and a skip, and a jump,

And placed a spell on the sleeping pair,
When, lo! at the morning's call,
The Mouse, it was plain,
Had been growing large,
And the Elephant growing small.

Then danced they a jig in their greenwood bower—
What less could the Fairy expect?
And each one remarked,
In merriest mood:
“We certainly are the elect.”

The change soon completed, their sizes reversed,
Again they would live at their ease—
The Elephant dined
On a thimble of hay,
The Mouse on a cart-load of cheese.



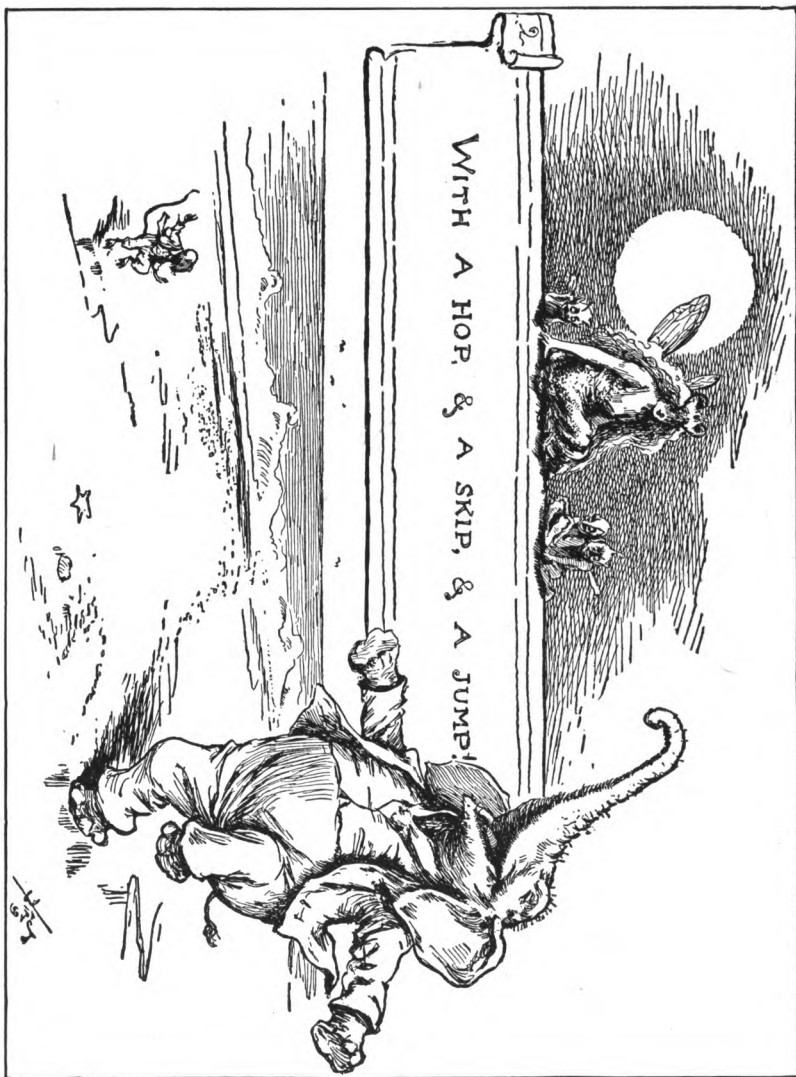
Grimalkin and traps no terrors possessed
For the Mouse in his new disguise;
 The Elephant scoffed
 As hidden he watched
The tents of the circus arise.

But joy was short-lived; sorrows gathered apace:
They were strangers among their own kin!
 They kept open house,
 As good neighbors should;
Yet no former companions dropped in.

Their talents were wasted in dozens of ways,
Which caused them still more to bewail:
 The Elephant had
 Little use for his trunk,
And the Mouse for his length of tail.

At last, when their griefs could no longer be borne,
And they had n't a single friend,
 They both laid them down
 By the pitying sea,
Their lives and their troubles to end.

Again, the pale moon being over the left,
And the wind a-sounding his trump,
 The Fairy came forth
 From her home in the cleft,
With a hop, and a skip, and a jump,



And, lifting the spell from the perishing pair
By the side of the whispering wave,
She bade them return
Each one to his own,
And be happy, and good, and brave.



MORAL (for Large Children) :
Let each be himself, not somebody else,
Nor covet what others may hold.
Each one has his place,
That he can best fill :
Contentment is silver and gold.

MORAL NUMBER TWO (Confidential, for Small
Children) :

When fairies come forth, with the moon on the left,
And the wind is sounding his trump,
 Good children had better
 Be scampering home,
With a hop, and a skip, and a jump!

A SPANISH TALE—TOLD IN THE SPANISH WAY

BY ALMONT BARNES



YOUNG and unmarried man, who had few goods, yet who was ready with his hands and a wonderful worker, lived once upon a time in Spain. He spent much time during the day among the mountains, cutting the hazel-rods, with which he made at home crates and wattles, to be sold at fairs and markets. He also tilled a little piece of hired land, and in partnership with another he had a small cow. So he went on slowly gaining, with patched

breeches and not very full stomach, but with good health, and contented,—because, perhaps, he had known nothing better.

But being one day in the mountains, and in the most lonely part of them,—because in the least frequented parts they always find good hazel-rods,—he cut this rod and that, and lo, he heard the music of a sea-shell near him! and so sweetly made that it was glorious to hear. And hearing the sea-shell so near, he went toward the sound; and going toward the sound, he parted the brambles; and parting the brambles, he came to a very pretty little opening, where he saw the sea-shell alone, against a great mole-hill, sounding without ceasing. But, for all that, he came nearer the mole-hill and saw that at its very edge, and with his little feet in the hole, there was seated a dwarf smaller than a man's clenched hand, and that it was this dwarf who made the music upon the sea-shell. And the dwarf, seeing the young man, stopped playing, and said to him:

“What is it, good friend?”

“I came here,” responded the youth, “to know what makes such fine music; but if I disturb you, I will go back to the place from which I came.”

At this the dwarf said to the young man:

"Disturb whom, man? Know that it was for you to come that I was playing."

And so the youth and the dwarf got into conversation, and the youth told the dwarf all the troubles of his life. And after telling him all the troubles of his life, the dwarf said to the young man:



"THE YOUNG MAN SAW A DWARF WHO MADE THE MUSIC UPON
THE SEA-SHELL."

"But, friend, I knew of all this before; and because I knew of it all, I called you with the music, to ask you what it is you desire in reward for your rectitude."

To this the young man responded:

"Besides what I have from my rented ground and the partnership, if I had twice as much more with which to live without this labor upon the mountains, which is what troubles me, I should believe myself the richest man in the place, and would not envy the King of the Indies."

"Well, take what you desire, if what you say is enough," answered the dwarf; and the youth responded:

"It is enough, and sufficient for me, seeing what I have had until now, and the evil use I might make of more because of my ignorance."

Then the dwarf said to him:

"Take up this dirt that you see near me, and put it into your handkerchief."

But the young man was astonished at this command, and thought the dwarf was mocking at him. Then the dwarf said again:

"Take it up, man, without hesitation, for I have my palaces full of it; and to them this passage goes in which my feet are."

Whether the youth thought this was true or not, he pulled his handkerchief out from his breast and threw into it a good heap of the dirt, and then tied the corners of the handkerchief together. And then the dwarf said to him:

“Now go home, and when you go to bed, put this dirt under your bed-blanket, as it is in your handkerchief. When you awake in the morning, you will see if I have deceived you.”

Well, the young man did as he was directed, and upon awaking in the morning with the sun, he opened the handkerchief; and behold, the dirt had changed into golden doubloons and half-doubloons—with one and another he had more than a thousand! The poor crate-maker was almost beside himself with joy. But as his senses came back to him little by little, he began to make his plans: so many measures of ground so, and so many in this way; so many cattle of this kind, and so many of another; a cart of this kind; a house like this. And you must know that in a little time, with great care, and with flocks and herds in sight, well-clothed and fed, and with money left in the top of his chest, there was such a flutter that the best girls of the place were kind to him, and sent him memorials with their eyes. And well did he merit it; because, besides being a good young man and rich, he continued to be an honored laborer, just the same as when he was poor.

But behold, one day it came to his mind to see

a little of the world, something that he had never seen; so all at once he took up his quarters in the



"ALL AT ONCE HE TOOK UP HIS QUARTERS IN THE CITY"

city. Ah, what did he not see there, of festivity, courtliness, and dominion? Those, yes, *those* were the young ladies, with their silken attire,

and their laces, and their fans, and faces of May roses. Those, yes, *those* were the young gentlemen, with their coats of fine cloth, their golden tassels, and their shining boots! What a life was theirs! This one on horseback, that one in a coach, the other, with gay companions! Going here, going there; a good table, plenty of servants, and a big palace—what would you want but to live so, and live in glory?

So it came to pass that the young man went back to his village thinking himself the most unfortunate creature in the world. And going back so to his native village, he began to doubt about the good of his humble possessions, and to dislike work; and he spent whole days thinking of what he had seen, and of being a gentleman with the best. And thinking in this way, he wanted the gay coach and horses, and the servants and the palace, and a grand lady for a wife; and one could not mention the girls of his neighborhood to him, because they all seemed unworthy such a person as himself. So when he had entirely stopped attending to his usual labors, and began to feed upon his vanity, there came into his mind a certain idea that he did not quite dare to put in execution. But, you see, as things were, he had no other way than to do it, because his vanity

was like to make an end of him, and he would not return to the soil he had stopped tilling.

So one day he yoked his oxen to his cart, put into the cart half a dozen empty sacks, and went up into the mountains; and going up into the mountains, he came to the place for which he was looking; and coming to that place, he heard the sound of the dwarf's shell; and hearing the sound, he went near to the dwarf, and said to him:

"Hallo, my good friend! I came to thank you for the kindness you did to me some time ago, and to ask of you a new one, if it does not displease you."

"What is there to displease me, man?" responded the dwarf. "If it is anything I can do, ask it freely."

This answer gave joy to the heart of the young man, and he said to the dwarf:

"Well, I want to fill these sacks, that I have brought here, with the same kind of dirt that you gave me before."

"All this country is full of it," answered the dwarf; "and that being so, dig where you like, and fill them to your liking. Don't forget to put them to-night near the bed, to open them as soon as you awake in the morning."

And saying this, the dwarf went away into the

passage toward his palaces, and left the young man alone; and the young man dug and dug, and



"HALLO, MY GOOD FRIEND! I CAME TO THANK YOU FOR THE
KINDNESS YOU DID TO ME SOME TIME AGO!"

in a little time he filled his sacks with dirt, and then went home with them as happy as the crickets. And when night came, he went to bed; but he slept little because of the disturbance which he

carried in his mind, and at daylight he was livelier than a rabbit; and being livelier than a rabbit, he thought he would dig a deep well in which to guard so many doubloons as ought to come out of those sacks. And, thinking about this, he opened the sacks; and upon opening the sacks, he found nothing therein but the dirt he had shoveled into them in the mountains! The poor young man was in agony; and being in agony, he tried to console himself with the thought that, looking at things properly, there was enough for him with what remained from the first time; and, thinking so, he went to the chest where he kept the little money that he had left, and behold, that was dirt also, like the dirt in the sacks!—and even the papers about his purchases were dirt!

Then he went to the stable, and his oxen were mountains of dirt; and great heaps of dirt were the herds which he bought with the money of the dwarf. There was left then not one beast except the cow of the partnership.

Then he went back to the house, and he saw that it was the same in which he lived when he was a poor crate-maker; and at the gate there was a load of hazel-rods and some half-finished crates. He sobbed, and beat his breast, the idle

fellow, and went up into the mountains to tell the dwarf about his misfortune; but the dwarf said to him:

“This which has happened to you I cannot help. I can only say to you that the misery which has come upon you is the punishment upon your covetousness; for you wished to pass at one bound, without meriting it, from the position of a thrifty crate-maker to that of a gentleman of importance. But the linnet keeps to its kind.”

And the dwarf disappeared in the passage leading to his palaces; but the youth heard no more the music of the shell, as if it were a sound from paradise.



Burning The Midnight Fire-fly

A GIANT IN FRAGMENTS

BY FELIX LEIGH

A LONG time ago, in the country of Pastan-gonia, there was once a Giant who was born very good-natured. As most giants are born ill-natured, this one was an exception to the general rule. Nothing pleased him more than to do kind actions. Of course all sorts of folks came from the regions round about to get the Giant to help them in various ways. Anybody who was too weak, or too cowardly, or too lazy to do something that he wanted to do, would seek an interview with the Giant, and forthwith proceed to pile all his responsibilities on the Giant's broad back.

Well, one morning, just about cock-crow, a certain Prince rode up to the Giant's castle and gave a tremendous tug at the big castle bell. Then, as nobody answered, he kicked loudly at

the postern-gate, and so aroused the Giant, who was a sound sleeper.

When the Giant appeared on the threshold, rubbing his eyes and yawning, the Prince said crossly: "Well, I must say you keep me waiting very long, considering my rank! Do you call this sort of thing being good-natured?"

But the Giant pretended not to hear, and asked his visitor what he could have the pleasure of doing for him, and invited him to climb up the audience-ladder and explain his business.

Then, the Prince, regarding the Giant attentively, saw that he had a ladder of handsome embroidery running up his clothing from foot to shoulder, as a convenience for the public at large. Whereupon he climbed to the Giant's shoulder with great agility, and so found himself on a level with the Giant's right ear.

"Though I know I look every inch a king," he said, "you must n't suppose I am one; for I have n't been crowned yet—thanks to the plottings of an unprincipled relative of mine. My uncle is a usurper, and he has stolen my kingdom from me."

The Giant bowed so low that he almost toppled his royal visitor from his shoulder.

"Don't do that again!" said the Prince, whose front name was Tesso, and whose back name is of consequence in a fairy tale; "I can't bear a groveler. And now allow me to tell you what I want you to do. To begin with, I desire you to boil my wicked uncle in oil. Water would, of course, come cheaper, but I prefer to have him slowly simmered in oil, as a warning to others, you understand. Next I wish you to decimate the army which has backed up my unscrupulous relation in his nefarious schemes. And, lastly, I'll get you to take a stroll through my dominions, and trample heavily on any of my rascally subjects who may come in your way, just to punish them for not having had spirit enough to cast off the yoke of the usurper. When you have done as I suggest, I can no doubt, without opposition, ascend the throne that is rightly mine. Have I your promise to aid me in the manner described?"

The Giant was a very slow thinker, and as he was accustomed to fall in with the views of all those who called upon him, he readily gave the desired promise, without pausing to look at the situation in all its bearings.

"Very well," said Prince Tesso. "Then we

had better start immediately for my dominions. Will you walk? It will save time if you do so, and you can easily carry me with you."

The obliging Giant, without more ado, at once stuck the Prince in his hat-band, and then proceeded to place several bushels of oats and the Prince's steed in one of his coat pockets, while a plentiful supply of provisions for the journey went into the other pocket.

The Giant plodded along steadily all day, but as the sun declined he grew more and more thoughtful. He was beginning to realize that he had acted foolishly, and that he was upon an errand which a Giant with a disposition like his own should not have rashly undertaken.

When evening came, he and the Prince encamped on the fringe of a wood of some extent. The Giant ate a very poor supper—for a Giant—and presently turned to Prince Tesso, and said:

"I don't, after all, quite like the idea of boiling your Royal Highness's uncle in oil, of destroying a number of presumably gallant warriors, and of crushing a still larger number of simple citizens under my heels like so many beetles; so if your Royal Highness will excuse me, I think I 'll turn back and walk home."



"HE CLIMBED TO THE GIANT'S SHOULDER"

Thereupon the Prince said severely that he was n't going to permit the Giant to go back on his word. He must fulfil to the letter the promise he had made, or he would be a disgraced Giant for evermore.

They argued the matter for some time, but the Prince was firm, and finally the Giant had to give up all hope of shaking the royal resolution.

But when the Prince had gone to sleep on a bed of dried leaves, the Giant stole off through a shadowy avenue of the wood. He said to himself, "Perhaps the Fairy Flitella will be able to help me, if I can only find her."

After a while, as he advanced, he heard a sound of elfin music, and to his great delight perceived the little personage of whom he was in search seated upon a big pink toadstool. As soon as she recognized the Giant, she put down her mandolin—an instrument contrived out of an acorn cup, with half a dozen strands of spider's web for strings,—and smiled him a gracious welcome.

"You need not trouble to go into details," said the Fairy. "I know everything, and I know therefore what is troubling you. I always said that your good-nature and your stupidity, work-

ing together, would get you into a mess one of these days, you silly fellow; and a nice dilemma you 're in at present, are n't you? As a good-



"IT APPEARS TO ME THAT FLIGHT WILL BE YOUR BEST PLAN"

natured Giant you can't boil a usurper in oil or any other liquid, and as a Giant of honor you can't break your spoken word. It appears to me that flight will be your best plan. Keep in hiding for a while, and perhaps Prince Tesso may change his mind, or his unboiled uncle may

repent and make restitution, or—a thousand things may happen. So fly at once.”

But the Giant smilingly pointed out that flight was out of the question for an individual of his physical proportions, who could n't go rushing through any country without attracting universal attention.

“If I tried to escape in that manner,” he said, “the Prince would at once be put upon my trail by some busybody, and then he would follow me up and insist upon keeping me to my fatal promise.”

Flitella was suddenly struck by a brilliant idea.

“I am willing,” she said, “if you desire it, to change you into ten men of less than ordinary height, and of commonplace appearance. If you will consent to disperse in fragments, your escape can, I think, be managed successfully.”

The Giant did n't altogether relish the notion of becoming ten ordinary dumpy mortals, for gianthood has its privileges, numerous and pleasant ones; but this was not a time to stick at trifles, so he begged the Fairy to effect the transformation with all speed, and allow him to get clear of the neighborhood before the Prince awoke.

Flitella produced a tiny pocket-wand which she always carried about with her, flew briskly up to the Giant's chest, and with the wand tapped him lightly on the third button of his jerkin once—twice—thrice—four times—five times—six times—seven times—eight times—nine times—ten times!

At the tenth tap there was audible a slight creaking sound, and the Giant fell all to pieces in a moment. Where he had reared his enormous bulk, ten funny little men attired in costumes not unlike the Giant's stood staring at one another very hard.

"Oh-h-h!" exclaimed the Giant's Fragments, contemptuously, "what a set of whippersnappers we are!"

"You 'll soon get used to yourself—or rather to yourselves," said the Fairy, consolingly. "And now you 'd better get away, the lot of you, as soon as you can. When you want to resume your proper form, you have merely to utter the magic word 'Azziwaz,' and the change will immediately take place."

The Giant, collectively and individually, thanked the Fairy for the trouble she had taken to serve him, and forthwith quitted the forest in

sections, each portion going by a different route, and traveling with stealth and caution.

But the Giant's Fragments, feeling lonely—which was but natural under the circumstances—took care to reassemble very shortly on the top



‘TEN FUNNY LITTLE MEN STOOD STARING AT ONE ANOTHER’

of a high mountain a couple of leagues away. Then, taking council together, they decided that they would for a time roam the country together, depending on a supply of alms, which they hoped to collect by begging at the doors of the well-to-do inhabitants.

As the people of the regions thereabouts had never seen any tramps before, they behaved with extreme generosity to the ten travelers, giving them massive segments of stale applepie, cold potatoes, and other delicacies to sustain them during their wanderings.

In the meantime the Prince had been gradually sinking in the world. Abandoned by the Giant, he had given up his oil-boiling project and the rest of his plot against his wicked uncle, and had looked around for a means of livelihood; for he had no money whatever, and, what was worse still, no subjects upon whom he could levy taxes.

In a few days he was compelled to sell his horse in order to raise funds, and then all his jewels and his fine clothing went by degrees, and he was at length driven to drop the ornamental for the useful, and to hire himself out to a prosperous farmer for his board and lodging, and a few ducats a year.

At first he would rail terribly at the Giant for betraying him; but by degrees he forgot to do this, for he had fallen deeply in love with the farmer's daughter, and it seemed to him that to be near her was happiness greater than any he could have known as a king with a crown on his head and a boiled uncle on his conscience.

Day by day he grew more reconciled to his lot, for the fair Seena returned his affection.

The two lovers became formally betrothed, and then a dreadful thing happened. Seena went out one afternoon to look for a stray lamb, and

she did not return. Everybody said she had been "carried away by the Warbilow."

Now, the Prince knew no more than you do what the Warbilow was; but when it was reported that his Seena, whom he loved so dearly, had been abducted by such a creature, he made haste to institute inquiries, and as Seena's father was at hand, it was he whom Prince Tesso proceeded to interrogate.

"Who or what is the Warbilow?" said the Prince.

"The Warbilow," replied the farmer, endeavoring to speak as calmly as an encyclopedia, "is the Dragon Bird of this kingdom, and he frequently carries people off to his cavern-nest in the center of the Cinder Desert. There he keeps them in his pantry until he is hungry, and then—"

The Prince interrupted him by brandishing a pitchfork, and avowing his intention to pursue the Warbilow and rescue Seena at once.

"It is useless," replied the old man, dolefully. "Everybody about here has good reason to believe the prophetic rhyme which has been handed down to us by our forefathers, and which runs as follows:

“Till ten men who have once been one
Shall cleave his heart in twain,
The Warbilow unscathed shall go,
And not by man be slain.”

“Many young men have attempted what you would attempt, but they have all perished, for, of course, they were not ‘ten men who had once been one,’ and so the Warbilow was able to defeat and tear them to fragments. There is no hope for my unhappy daughter.”

Prince Tesso did not stay to contradict him. He simply set off, running his hardest, in the direction of the Cinder Desert.

He ran on and on through the night. The moon set, and misty starlight darkness closed in upon him, but still he ran on, pursuing the path as best he might. So when day broke, he found himself on the confines of the Desert. Then he accidentally tripped over a large stone, and fell headlong into a small dell or hollow in which were encamped ten sturdy little vagabonds.

These were, as you may guess, the Giant's Fragments, waiting, all ready, though they did n't know anything about it, to do a good turn for the Prince they were bent on avoiding; for,

whether he liked it or not, the good-natured Giant was destined to be a good-natured Giant to the end of his days. A giant of this sort cannot hope to escape his fate by dodging about the country in ten pieces.

When the Fragments of the Giant had recovered from their astonishment,—and well might they feel surprised when they recognized Prince Tesso,—they inquired, in chorus, what the Prince meant by thrusting himself so unceremoniously into the company of honest travelers: who he was, whence he came; and whither he was going?

The Prince's heart was very full, so he freely told his story with what breath he had left in his body after his long run. He even repeated the ancient rhyme about the ten men who had once been one:

“Till ten men who had once been one”—

At this point the Fragments of the Giant might have been seen to scratch their ten pates and to stare into vacancy. They were thinking,—thinking hard,—and it did n't come easily to them; though, as ten heads are certainly better

than one, it was probably a less difficult job for them than the Giant had found it in his undivided day.

"This was evidently a matter that requires our attention," they said, after some deliberation. "We can slay your Warbilow for you, your Royal Highness. Shall we slay the Warbilow for you, or shall we not? If you really want the monster killed, we will undertake to put an end to him with punctuality and despatch—on one condition."

"Name it," eagerly cried the Prince.

"That you will release the good-natured Giant of Pastangonia from a rash promise he once made you. It had reference, we believe, to a—well, to a conspiracy, let us say, which you were hatching against your uncle."

"I suppose the Giant is a friend of yours," said Prince Tesso, "or you would n't take such an interest in his affairs. But, anyhow, since you wish it, he can consider that I give him back his plighted word, though I really don't know what has become of the fellow."

"To be sure you don't," gleefully chorused the Fragments of the Giant, giving six large grins and four smaller ones; "but that is no conse-

quence at all,—and so we had better be marching.”

The Giant's Fragments fell in behind one another in single file, while Prince Tesso took his place at the head of the invading force. He would n't on any account have walked in the rear, though he certainly felt a little ashamed of the pitchfork he had brought with him, and wished it had been a jewel-hilted rapier instead.

Presently, as the procession moved across the Cinder Desert, there was heard a flapping of leathern wings and an angry screaming, and the Warbilow himself flew out into the open from behind a dense thicket of cactus which concealed the entrance to his nest.

The combat which ensued was short and sharp. The Fragments of the Giant hacked away with a will with the swords they carried, attacking the Dragon Bird on all sides at once.

In five minutes the fight was over, and the Warbilow had spread out his enormous wings, and expired with gurglings which resembled a distant thunder-storm.

Almost before life had left the body of the monster, Prince Tesso pushed his way through the cactus hedge.

In the Dragon Bird's cavern he discovered his

THE FIGHT WITH THE WARBLER



beloved Seena, pale with anxiety and fright, but quite uninjured.

"If you stay where you are, you will be lifted over the cactus hedge," shouted the Giant's Fragments cheerily.

They had sheathed their swords and drawn themselves up in a line, and they now uttered, all together, the magic word "Azziwaz."

The spell worked as a practical spell should work, and on the instant there towered up before the Prince and Seena, but on the other side of the hedge, the form of the good-natured Giant. He reached over the prickly barrier, and taking the lovers in one hand, drew them up and set them down safely on his own side of the thicket.

"Your Royal Highness," said the Giant, politely, "you did well not to hold me to my promise, I think. If I have n't boiled your uncle, my Fragments have rescued your bride, and we are therefore more than quits."

The Prince, besides being rather confounded in his mind by the sudden reappearance of the Giant, was too happy to argue the point; and, truth to tell, he did n't really any longer want anything unpleasant to happen to his wicked relative. His ideas had undergone a great change, and he was looking forward to living the serene

life of a private citizen with his pretty Seena, who would, he well knew, have been highly uncomfortable on a hard, high-backed throne, with a heavy crown on her charming brow.

So the Giant went straightway home to his castle, while the Prince and Seena returned to the farm, where Seena's aged parents met them with open arms. But, though he returned to the farm, Prince Tesso did not intend to follow agriculture as a calling for the future, as he saw a quicker path to wealth before him.

He had the body of the dead Warbilow stuffed by a skilful taxidermist, and with it he made a tour of the principal towns of the kingdom, exhibiting the monster to gaping and delighted crowds, and gathering in the ducats at the door. In this manner he speedily amassed a large fortune, on which he and Seena lived happily ever afterward.

As for the Giant, he continued to be as willing as in the old time to assist his humbler neighbors in Pastangonia, but there his good-nature drew a line, for he had a board painted with great black letters as long as his arm, which he hung out on his battlements, and all who passed by read the legend on his board:

“No Princes Need Apply.”

THE COOKY-NUT TREES

(A Tale of the Pilliwinks.)

BY ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE

OH, the Pilliwinks lived by the portals of Loo,
In the land of the Pullicum-wees,
Where gingerbread soldiers and elephants grew
On the top of the cooky-nut trees.
And the Pilliwinks gazed at them, wondering how
They could get at those goodies so brown;
But the ginger-men danced on the cooky-nut bough,
And the elephants would n't come down.

But along came a witch of the Pullicum-wees—
To the 'winks she was friendly, I guess—
For they said: "At the top of those cooky-nut trees
Are some treasures we 'd like to possess."
And she quickly replied, "I can show you the way
To obtain all the gingerbread men,
And the elephants, too; and this verse you may say,
And repeat it again and again.

"Pillicum, willicum, pullicum-wee,
Winkety, wankety, up in a tree;
Wankety, winkety, tippety top—
Down come the cooky-nuts, hippety hop!"

Then all of the Pilliwinks stood in a row,
And repeated this beautiful song,
Till the elephants eagerly hastened below,
And the soldiers marched down in a throng.
And for many long years by the portals of Loo
The Pilliwink people you 'd see
Enticing the gingerbread goodies that grew
At the top of the cooky-nut tree.



AN EXCITING RACE IN ELF-LAND



THERE is n't any giant
Within this forest grim,
And if there were, I would n't be
A bit afraid of him !

THE ASTROLOGER'S NIECE

BY TUDOR JENKS

I AM not sorry that I became an astrologer. The work is monotonous but not wearing, and the hours are short. As an apprentice I was a hard student, and frequently consulted the stars; but now, without conceit, I think I speak within bounds in saying that I know all there is to know about planets, stars, asteroids, comets, nebulæ, and horoscopes, and twice as much as any other astrologer of my weight; so I seldom refresh my memory by going, through my telescope, directly to nature.

I admit it is inconvenient to be obliged to wear a thick woolen robe on warm days. I also admit that a shorter beard would be less in my way, and that I might shave if my customers did not object. I do not deny that my raven, a second-hand

bird which once belonged to Zadkiel, is a nuisance, because of his continually stealing my spectacles. As I have only one pair, it is very hard to find them when I have no spectacles to find them with. The bird is not sympathetic, and enjoys my annoyance over the search; croaking derisively as I go stumbling around among dusty old books and brittle glass crucibles. This irritates me; and I put him on bread and water, which irritates him.

My calculations are a bore; and I am very apt to pinch my fingers or entangle my beard in the celestial globe. My customers are greedy, and insist upon being kings, duchesses, pirates, and so on, ignoring the indications which plainly show them to be intended for hurdy-gurdy players, scissors-grinders, or poets. The planets are all right; I have no particular fault to find with the fixed stars; but those vagabonds, the comets, will often act in the most unfriendly way,—spoiling my very best combinations. It makes customers ill-natured, and they hold me responsible, just as though I arranged the comets to suit myself! Perhaps it is not strange that I am a trifle touchy; I feel sure astrologers will agree that I am no more nervous than is excusable under the trials

of the profession. Still, I repeat, I am satisfied with my vocation. I did hesitate between stargazing and saw-filing; but I think my choice was not unwise; for, as an astrologer, I became more or less familiar with magic,—a pleasant recreation if pursued with proper discretion, but not fit for children. While I lived alone, I had no trouble with it; for although I made mistakes, I was indulgent enough to overlook them.

But when my only sister unfortunately died and left a lovely little daughter alone in the world, whom nobody else could be persuaded to adopt, I foolishly consented to bring up that child. It was an amiable, even admirable, weakness—but—my stars! what curious things a child can do!

I had had no kindergarten experience. I was never in an orphan asylum, so far as I know, and I was an only son. I knew nothing of children, except such superficial acquaintance as enabled me to foretell their futures and to advise parents about bringing them up; and yet in my old age I was thus, by an accident, forced to take full charge of a small girl of very decided traits—born with Jupiter in the ascendant, and Mercury not far off! What bothered me most was her goodness. A bad child can be coaxed and

punished ; but an affectionate, mischievous, obedient, and innocent girl—what *can* be done with her ?

I never thought of locking up my books of magic—and she must have read them, I suppose ; for, before I knew it, that youngster was working spells and charms, fixing up enchantments, and making transformations which required more time to disentangle than I could readily spare from my business hours.



“WHAT *CAN* BE DONE WITH HER?”

The first disagreeable experience resulted from her having read about some old flying horse in Greece, Turkey, or elsewhere, and she took to wandering about the fields keeping a bright lookout for him! I suspect she became discouraged, and resolved to make one for herself, since she caught a little colt, fixed a pair of wings by some spell or other upon the colt's shoulders, and attempted to harness him with flowers; whereupon he flew away! It could n't have displeased the colt, for he was not at all sedate in character. But the farmer who owned him did not think of that. He came to see me about it, thoughtlessly bringing his pitchfork with him; so I found it best to promise to remove the wings. Luckily, she had left the book open at the very charm that had been used and I was able to undo it; though there was some delay, caused by the necessity of using a lock of hair from the head of the Sultan, who was kind enough to grow one for me as soon as he could.

Now that child did n't mean any harm; she could n't see why a horse should n't fly,—the little goose!—nor could I explain it to her very clearly. She promised, however, not to do so again, and of course we said no more about it.

The week after, coming home one day I found my room filled to the brim, so to speak, with an enormous green dragon who blew smoke from his



MY NIECE'S EXPERIMENT IN MAGIC

nostrils so profusely that it gave me some trouble to convince the villagers that there was no fire and that they were nuisances, with their buckets and ladders!

Of course my magic-books were inaccessible, and we took lodgings with a neighbor until the

dragon was starved out. The dragon's skin made an excellent rug, but the experience was not enjoyable. I could not reprove my niece for this, because she explained very frankly that she had made the dragon larger than she intended; it was only a misfit.

You may think me absent-minded; but it never occurred to me to forbid these practices, although, had I done so, she would have obeyed me. I forgot about it, except when some new prank brought the matter to my mind, and then I became absorbed in remedying the difficulty caused by her experiment. Once I tried to divert her mind by inducing her to adopt a doll which the raven had cleverly secured from somebody; but her care for it was so evidently due to a desire to please me that whenever she held it I was uneasy. When the raven took the doll away again (let us hope, to return it), we were both relieved.

For a time after the dragon incident, my niece was shy of using the magic-books, and I enjoyed this quiet interval very much. I was occupied in manufacturing a horoscope for the innkeeper, who was quite well-to-do. He had promised me a round sum for a favorable sketch of his future,

and I was anxious to give satisfaction and to collect my bill. But the stars indicated that only the strictest economy would tide him over a coming financial crisis in his affairs—which made me fear there might be some uncertainty about my fee. Absorbed in this perplexity, I may have neglected my niece; at all events, she got into the habit of spending her time with the innkeeper's family.

A commercial magician from Lapland, of great dignity and little importance, chanced to arrive at the inn while my niece was there. Overhearing his negotiation with the landlord, she learned, through the foolish talkativeness of the magician, that the long and imposing train of mules and other companions accompanying him were not, in reality, what they appeared to be, but were simply his performing company of manufactured hallucinations disguised in their traveling shapes. Imagine the effect upon the curious and ingenuous mind of my playful niece! The heedless magician, with equal carelessness, left his wand upon the table in the front hall, where anybody could reach it. You can foresee the result.

It must have been merely by chance that she succeeded in counteracting the spell by which these creatures were confined to their every-day

forms. However that may be, you may imagine what happened while the magician was at dinner



ARRIVAL OF THE COMMERCIAL MAGICIAN

that afternoon. The inquiring spirit of childhood led my niece to make trial of the wand, when, of course, the mules and attendants returned to their

original shapes and flew off, a buzzing swarm of bees! I was walking in the village, and so soon as I saw the swarm I understood what had happened, and must admit, I was amused.

When I arrived at the inn, the magician was discontented. He failed to appreciate the child's ingenuity and enterprise, and really seemed inclined to speak hastily to the poor child, who stood looking on with an innocent pleasure in her success, which I found charming. But, since I was there he only stared helplessly about and seemed anxious to say more than he could wait to pronounce, till I told him that he must have patience and fortitude. As he came to his senses he showed signs of knowing what to do. He sent for the pepper-casters and vinegar-cruets, neatly changed them into divining-boxes, which straightway poured forth the proper necromantic fumes, and then—remembered that he needed his wand! A long search resulted in finding it up the kitchen chimney, after which a careful and laborious cleansing brought it into a suitable condition to be handled. All this, my niece greatly enjoyed. By that time, the magician was very much irritated and began a powerful invocation to a muscular spirit who would, perhaps, have

brought the whole party back, in a jiffy!—but I interfered, and explained to him, at some length, that the whole episode was nothing more than a piece of girlish curiosity, not calling for any harsh methods or severe measures. I offered my assistance, which he declined,—without thanks. I shrugged my shoulders and was strolling indifferently away when he began to make an answer. I saw that he had not an easy command of language.

“What nonsense!—such a fix I ’m in!—girlish curiosity!—Where do you think that pack of irresponsible insects has gone?—I hope they will—Please to get away!” I withdrew. It was not my affair, but they told me that my niece, inadvertently I am sure, had injured the wand so that it failed to work, and that the magician made futile attempts to use it, until the boys laughed at him, when he desisted. Having lost all his attendants, materials, and supplies, and his wand being useless, the magician was almost distracted. He was unable to leave the village, and the landlord would n’t have him at the inn, so I took him to board on credit, at a reasonable charge.

When the magician took up his abode with me, my niece was somewhat fond of questioning him,

but apparently found that it was not worth her time, for she seemed to lose interest in him very



“THE MAGICIAN BEGAN A POWERFUL INVOCATION”

soon. In fact she forgot all about him and about me as well, and became entirely absorbed in an attempt to teach the raven to play Jack-stones—for which recreation he showed very little talent. As there was, necessarily, considerable noise in her course of instruction, I requested her to hold the sessions out-of-doors, and she kindly adopted the suggestion.

In order to occupy the magician's mind I gave

him some copying, but he was n't interested in his work. He was restless, and wandered out into the country searching high and low for the curious crowd of nondescripts which my careless niece had liberated in a praiseworthy attempt to gain knowledge. I called his attention to this view of the subject and asked whether he did not see it in the same light, but I must say he was quite unreasonable and prejudiced. He left the room abruptly, forgetting his hat, leaving the door wide open and his quill-pen behind his ear. He was gone for some time. In the afternoon he came back radiant, crying aloud:

"I have found them—I have found them!" and dancing with joy. His dancing was very good, but I was busy and paid no attention to him. If he had been a man of any tact, he would have felt my indifference; but some people can not take a hint, and he went on as eagerly as though I had shown some interest in the performance.

"As I was walking in the meadows," he shouted, "I nearly tripped over the body of a peasant lying flat upon the ground, studying an ant-hill with a magnifying glass. I asked him what he was doing and he told me that he was

The Sluggard, and that he had been advised to go to the ants and consider their ways and be wise. I required how he was getting on; he said he was getting on very well, that he had learned



THE SLUGGARD, CONSIDERING

to gather all he could, to store it up where it would be safe, and to keep in out of the wet."

This bored me extremely, and I coughed significantly, but the magician continued rambling:

"I asked if I might look through the lens. He said I might, and I did. Now what do you suppose I saw through that lens?"

I had not recovered my good humor. I confess that I am sensitive and that my feelings are easily hurt. This foolish attempt to ask me rhetorical conundrums displeased me, and I made

no reply. But that man was not discouraged. He repeated the question. Turning toward him, I spoke in a way he could not possibly misunderstand.

"Upon applying your eye to the glass," I remarked, "you were astonished to perceive that the small creatures which you had supposed to be common black ants were in reality a colony of bees, who seemed for some strange reason of their own to have chosen an abandoned ant-hill for a hive! This anomaly seems not to have attracted your notice; but, if I had been with you, I could have informed you that you might have concluded from so very significant a fact that this was the swarm which you are so anxious to find. Does not reflection incline you to agree with me?"

He was disappointed. He had foolishly hoped to surprise me—such puerility! "You are right," he replied, in a muffled sort of voice.

"Very well," said I. "Now, in my turn, I will propose a question. Your wand being out of order, how are you to get those wanderers back?" I enjoyed his discomfiture. His face was a study, and I studied it until I learned that he had no sug-

gestion to make. His face wore no expression whatever.

Then, in a kindly spirit, I said to him: "Bring me your little wand. Sit down like a magician, and don't dance about like a dervish, and I'll fix it for you." He was visibly moved by my kindness, and agreed to all I proposed. He brought the wand and, after a keen examination, I found a screw loose and with my penknife I tightened it. A sickly smile flitted over his face. "You are doing me a good turn," he murmured. I gave him a searching glance; but the smile was so faint, and faded so quickly, that I decided he did not mean to be humorous. It was lucky for him, for astrologers are sworn foes to humorists; and I should have broken his wand into several fragments if I had detected the slightest levity. He said no more. Having mended the wand, I handed it to him, saying: "Go, recover your chattels!" He retired with briskness, and it gives me pleasure to record the fact that I have never seen him since.

My niece told me, casually, that she was glad that the magician was gone. I offered to tell her about his departure, but she assured me she took

no interest in the subject. She did not say any more about it, and, since I do not believe in encouraging childish prattle, I made no more allusions to our boarder.

I have lately asked her whether she would prefer to qualify herself to study astrology, with magic as an extra, or would be better satisfied to learn saw-filing under some well-known virtuoso. She replied with much discretion, that she thought a quiet life was the happiest after all. So, although she has not yet expressed herself more definitely, I feel sure she is giving the subject mature consideration. I admire her greatly, and predict that she will do well if carefully neglected.

As time passes, I notice that I grow older, and, although I cannot repent having chosen the career of an astrologer, if my niece chooses the saw-filing business, I may perhaps take up some similar musical pursuit, so that we may not be separated. Meanwhile my niece is attending a very excellent school, and makes good progress in her studies. In fact her progress was so rapid at first, that she came near graduating in about two weeks; but, as I then persuaded her to give up the use of the magic-books, she is now making

slower and more satisfactory progress, being quite backward.

The dust lies thick on the magic-books. Magic is amusing, but it sometimes makes trouble.

THE LITTLE ELF

BY JOHN KENDRICK BANGS



I MET a little Elf-man, once,
Down where the lilies blow.
I asked him why he was so small
And why he did n't grow.

He slightly frowned, and with
his eye
He looked me through and
through.
"I'm quite as big for me," said
he,
"As you are big for you."



WORKADAY FAIRIES.

HOW AN ELF SET UP HOUSEKEEPING

BY ANNE CLEVE

A STURDY young elf was skipping along through the queen's garden one day, with his hands in his trousers'-pockets, whistling an air then very much in vogue among elves, when he chanced to espy a glorious calla broken from the stem, and standing upside down in the middle of the walk. There it stood snowy and crisp, where some rude, boisterous wind had tossed it, after having snapped it clean from the mother stalk.

Now you must know the elf was an infinitesimal atom of fairy flesh and blood no taller than a small-sized butterfly when it stands on its head; and to him this capsized calla looked for all the world like a great white tent, glistening with dew-diamonds in the morning sun. The elf stopped skipping and whistling to steal wondering near.

Drawing his hands out of his trousers'-pockets, he folded back one side of the white petal, and peered in. All was cool, fragrant emptiness, save for the golden pistil which the elf thought was the tent-pole. Then he stepped in, and gave a low chuckle of complete satisfaction as he breathed the sweet purity, and gazed upward through the white stillness to the pointed, shadowy roof.

Nowhere could a more daintily perfect domicile be found for an elf than this; and he resolved straightway to set up housekeeping in a tent. But how should he remove his new piece of property to some shadier and more retired nook in the woods? For an elf to set up an establishment in the queen's garden would be not only audacious, but most imprudent; for might not a vigilant gardener brush away elf, shelter, and all some fine morning? Or might not her majesty's robe trail over his roof as she strayed up and down the flower-bordered walk? Or perchance an officious maid of honor might fleck it away from her satin shoe-tip, or a gallant courtier beat it down with a wanton blow of his riding-whip. Surely it behooved the elf to convey his treasure to some safer spot; but how? Then

he bethought him of his patrician friend the peacock, who just now came with stately strut down the broad path.

“Good morrow, my lord,” quoth the elf, “In sooth I am in a sorry plight.”

“And what may be the cause of your vexation?” asked the noble bird, looking down with a grand sort of kindness at the perplexed little man and his overturned calla.

“My lord,” answered our hero, “I have found this most delightful tent, which seems to be of no service here to any one, and I would fain pitch it in the woodlands yonder, hard by the brook, but my strength is not great enough to convey it thither.

Then the cunning elf looked very humble and very miserable, so that his great friend and patron took compassion upon him, and, bidding him follow, lifted the tent daintily in his beak, and bore it through the great garden, across the broad park, to the woods beyond, according to the elf’s wish. The little fellow was profuse in his thanks, and his lordship the peacock strutted away much puffed up with the consciousness of having done a handsome thing—a very handsome thing, indeed.

Ah! the elf was a happy fellow as he stood off and surveyed the graceful outlines of this fairy structure, perched upon the brink of the purling beck near a forest of rushes.

A wish and a fulfilment cause another wish, and, as the elf leaned in his tent-door, he saw not far away his friend the spider, spinning in the sun. Her silver threads shone against a background of dark leaves, as she busily wove them in and out, in and out, after a wonderful fashion.

"Ho, there, my good dame!" called the elf; "pr'y thee, make me a curtain to hang before my door, that all the prying eyes of the wood may not see into my home. Weave it close of silver threads, and I will catch you a goodly meal of flies if it be done before nightfall."

The rather sour-visaged grandam signified her willingness to fulfil his behest, and the enterprising manikin then determined that he would go in search of something to serve as a bed; for night would come, and there would be nothing to lie upon but the ground; moreover, his home looked barren without furniture or household goods of any kind.

As he hopped airily along, he glanced backward proudly, every now and then, at his pretty abode,



GOOD-DAY TO YOU, MOTHER"

and hugged himself by way of congratulation. He was thus hopping and looking backward when he stumbled and fell sprawling over a pebble; whereupon he uttered so loudly an exclamation of disgust that it awakened his friend the owl, who sat napping on a bough above him. Seeing the

elf's ludicrous plight, she gave a sleepy laugh, which was well meant but rather grating, especially to the nerves of the fallen elf, who looked up, saying sharply, "Oh, Mother Owl, 't is you, I see. It takes wisdom like yours to see the fun in a fall." But he was a merry manikin, and, picking himself up, he too laughed and told the owl of his new home, and how he was trying to set up housekeeping. Mother Owl blinked sagely—so sagely that the elf thought possibly she might have some suggestion to offer as to where he was to procure the wished-for bed. The elf was right; the old mother assured him that if he would walk along the highway until he came to a patch of meadow-land to the left, he would find one living there called Mistress Thistle, who was a good, sensible body, though somewhat difficult to approach, and doubtless she would help him. "For," said the owl, "my friend the ass has often spoken of her to me, and he knows her to be a lovable old soul, though rather coarse, my dear elf, rather coarse."

"So she helps me to a fine bed, good mother, I care not how coarse she may be," replied the elf. "I will seek out this Mistress Thistle and ply my powers of persuasion. Good day to you,

mother! Your wisdom is matched only by the sweetness of your voice"; and off tripped this arch flatterer, with a funny little twinkle in the corner of his eye.

"Pooh-hoo!" said the owl, and straightway fell a-napping.

As the elf pursued his way, he met many of his friends, little creatures of the wood going about their different ways in the sunshiny morning, like the good, honest little folk they were; and all had a kindly greeting for the elf, whose jolly countenance was well known and well liked in all the country round.

He soon came to the meadow, and there sat Mistress Thistle with an astonishing purple cap on her broad head. As the elf approached, he doffed his own cap to her, and called up a very respectful "Good morrow" from where he stood beneath her in the meadow.

"Sweet Mistress Thistle," said he, with a sober gallantry which sat funnily enough upon his mischievous face and elfin figure, "I was advised by that dame of wise repute, Mother Owl, to come to you this morning to make an earnest request, she having assured me of your benevolence and willingness to serve your fellow-creatures. I am

fitting up a new home for myself, yonder in the woods, and I have naught to lay my weary bones upon at night save the ground, which is somewhat damp in that locality; and as a creature of your sense well knows—”

“There! child, say no more!” cried the homely but warm-hearted thistle; “I have that which will protect your blessed bones from the dampness, and cause you to slumber soundly withal.” Thereupon she shook down to him a shower of the fluffiest buff-colored down, deliciously soft, which fell in a generous heap at his feet.

“By my faith, Mistress Thistle, ’t is a goodly gift, and one for which I am most grateful,” said the elf heartily, as he bowed his thanks.

Just then a bee flew past them, loitering lazily, and the thistle nodded her head to him, calling, “Tarry one moment, I pray you, good Master Bee, and if your bag be empty I would have you lend it to this little gentleman who is fain to carry this down of my making to his home in the woods yonder; for he will have much ado about it if you be not so good as to help him.”

“Marry, that will I!” returned the bee in his hearty bass; “not only will I help him with the use of my bag, but I myself will carry his bundle

to the wood; for the sun is now well up, and our friend here might find his burden irksome in the noonday heat."

The elf protested, but the jolly old bee would hear of no other plan, and quickly stuffing his bag with the down, he flew off over the meadow and away in the direction of the wood, leaving the elf to bid adieu to the thistle, and bow himself off with smiling thanks.

As the elf strolled homeward through the noontide heat, he came to a neat little green house in the woods, made all of rushes; here lived his friend the toad, who now sat before the door in a dingy old spotted dressing-gown, looking like a drowsy Dutchman. He had eaten altogether too hearty a breakfast, and in consequence was feeling and looking very stupid. His mouth drooped and his eyes goggled at the elf, who greeted him as an old friend, and seated himself in the shade of the porch.

"Here is pleasant news for you, friend Toad," said he. "I have pitched a tent not a dozen of your hops away from here, and shall henceforth be your neighbor."

"H'm!" grunted the toad, with a lazy lack of enthusiasm which might have disconcerted any-



"'PERCHANCE YOU CAN SPARE ME A STOOL?'" SAID THE ELF TO THE TOAD"

thing except an elf; but elves are happy-go-lucky little beings who believe that a very kindly meaning may lurk under many an odd mode of expression, and an elf has a way of twisting the bright side of things outward as breezes turn birch leaves silver-side up.

Thus our tiny man took the toad's grunt as an expression of entire satisfaction and approval. "And by the way," cried he, as a new thought struck him, "you may prove yourself at once to be of a right neighborly spirit by giving me one of those excellent stools for which you are so famous. Perchance you can spare one?"

The toad nodded and signed to him to walk in and help himself. Nothing loath, the elf disappeared under the rush roof, and soon came forth bearing the tiniest toadstool, very white and soft, and fit to be a fairy queen's foot-stool.

"What could be better," quoth he, "for my new household? Let me know, my good friend, when I can be of service to you, and you will find me not forgetful of this favor."

"H'm!" grunted the toad again; "better take another, a larger one, for a table."

This was a happy idea, and the delighted elf at once acted upon it.

HOW AN ELF SET UP HOUSEKEEPING

As he was bidding adieu to the toad, his friend the humming-bird darted by; but seeing the elf he turned back and poised with airy grace upon a birchen spray. He was dressed with all his gorgeous elegance, wearing a rich coat of crimson velvet and a jaunty cap of green. Rubies and topaz gleamed here and there, and he had an air of ease and refinement which proved at once that he was a frequenter of courts, though somewhat of a gay and dainty Bohemian. With careless good humor, he offered to bear one of the elf's burdens; and the latter, after thanking him cordially, told him of the tent and all the morning's success. Then they started off, the elf trudging slowly beneath his table, and the bird flying with languid grace, balancing the toadstool upon his back.

"How go matters at court?" asked the elf, as they went their way through the sun-flecks and shadows.

"Oh, not so well as one might wish," replied the bird. "But one's heart need not break for all that. Doubtless you have heard of that rusty-coated young minstrel who has but lately made his way to court, and beguiled the queen's favor with the witchery of his voice. A shabby plebe-

ian, as you would say yourself, should you happen to meet him in daylight."

Here the humming-bird surveyed his own elegance with satisfaction, and hummed lightly:

"If the rose-queen turn away her face,
Hath not the gentle primrose grace?"

and the elf saw that condolences were not needed by this cavalier, who was even now flashing aside to greet a saucy cardinal-flower.

"A sweet maid," said the humming-bird, as he rejoined his companion, and together they reached the tent.

Dame Spider had already completed her work, and there floated a soft curtain of silver sheen before the elf's door.

When he entered, courteously bidding the bird to do likewise, he found that the bee had piled in one corner the fluffy heap of down, and had left also a little pat of honey wrapped in a wild-rose petal—a delicate attention fully appreciated by the elf, who had a sweet tooth. And some kindly creature had brought a great golden buttercup-bowl filled with morning dew, and set it down beside the honey. The elf invited his friend to sit

at his table and share the noontide repast, which the bird readily consented to do, and a merry meal they made of it.

During the rest of the day the elf was so busy receiving his cordial neighbors, who called to bid him welcome to his new home, that when night came he was glad to draw his curtain, slip off his clothes, and jump into bed. As he lay thinking over the events of the day, a firefly came to the door, offering him the use of his lamp; but the elf called out sleepily that he had no need of it, yet thanked him heartily all the same. In the distance, off toward the meadow, his friends the crickets were gathering for a moonlight dance. Their fiddles were squeaking blithely, and the elf thought, as he heard the merry little din, "Who would dream that those sober, black-coated crickets were such jolly fellows, carousing thus night after night? A festive life they lead of it. Now, my friends the frogs take life too seriously; 't is a dismal tune they have, one tone for all times. Ah, well! 't would be a funny world, filled all with fiddle-squeaks and dancing crickets. There goes my friend the firefly, swinging his lantern—a genial soul, but given to late hours. Ah, Mistress Thistle, my dream should be of you! In

sooth, 't is a comforting couch. What a pleasant world is this!—not one of my fellow-creatures so selfish he cannot pause to hear another's hopes and plans; not one so stingy he cannot give something from his store to help a brother's need." Then the nightingale's song floated in to him, through the golden moonlight, from the queen's garden. "Ah!" sighed the sleepy manikin, "yonder minstrel has a tuneful throat, though my friend Sir Skylark says his method is miserable. Ah, well! his music satisfies *her* heart, and the favor of one rose is enough for a bird's life, or an elf's either. In sooth, a sweet lulla—lulla-by—by—by—" and the elf was fast asleep in his little white tent.

It is long
story

THE WISH-RING

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN, BY
ANNA EICHBERG

A YOUNG farmer who was very unlucky sat on his plow a moment to rest, and just then an old woman crept past and cried: "Why do you go on drudging day and night without reward? Walk two days till you come to a great fir tree that stands all alone in the forest and overtops all other trees. If you can hew it down, you will make your fortune."

Not waiting to have the advice repeated, the farmer shouldered his ax and started on his journey. Sure enough, after tramping two days, he came to the fir tree, which he instantly prepared to cut down. Just as the tree swayed, and before it fell with a crash, there dropped out of its branches a nest containing two eggs. The eggs rolled to the ground and broke, and there darted out of one a young eagle and out of the other

rolled a gold ring. The eagle grew larger, as if by enchantment, and when it reached the size of a man, it spread its wings as if to try their strength, then, soaring upward, it cried: "You have rescued me; take as a reward the ring that lay in the other egg; it is a wish-ring. Turn it on your finger twice, and whatever your wish is, it shall be fulfilled. But remember there is but a single wish in the ring. No sooner is that granted than it loses its power and is only an ordinary ring. Therefore, consider well what you desire, so that you may never have reason to repent your choice." So speaking, the eagle soared high in the air, circled over the farmer's head a few times, then darted, like an arrow, toward the east.

The farmer took the ring, placed it on his finger, and turned on his way homeward. Toward evening, he reached a town where a jeweler sat in his shop behind a counter, on which lay many costly rings for sale. The farmer showed his own, and asked the merchant its value.

"It is n't worth a straw," the jeweler answered.

Upon that, the farmer laughed very heartily, and told the man that it was a wish-ring, and of greater value than all the rings in the shop together.

The jeweler was a wicked, designing man, and so he invited the farmer to remain as his guest over night. "For," he explained, "only to shelter a man who owns a wish-ring must bring luck."

So he treated his guest to wine and fair words; and that night, as the farmer lay sound asleep, the wicked man stole the magic ring from his finger and slipped on, in its place, a common one which he had made to resemble the wish-ring.

The next morning, the jeweler was all impatience to have the farmer begone. He awakened him at cock-crow, and said: "You had better go, for you have still a long journey before you."

As soon as the farmer had departed, the jeweler closed his shop, put up the shutters, so that no one could peep in, bolted the door behind him, and, standing in the middle of the room, he turned the ring and cried: "I wish instantly to possess a million gold pieces!"

No sooner said than the great, shining gold pieces came pouring down upon him in a golden torrent over his head, shoulders, and arms. Piti-fully he cried for mercy, and tried to reach and unbar the door; but before he succeeded, he stumbled and fell bleeding to the ground. As for the golden rain, it never stopped till the weight of

the metal crushed the floor, and the jeweler and his money sank through to the cellar. The gold still poured down till the million was complete, and the jeweler lay dead in the cellar beneath his treasure.

The noise, however, alarmed the neighbors, who came rushing over to see what the matter was; when they saw the man dead under his gold, they exclaimed: "Doubly unfortunate he whom blessings kill." Afterward, the heirs came and divided the property.

In the meantime, the farmer reached home in high spirits and showed the ring to his wife.

"Henceforth we shall never more be in want, dear wife," he said. "Our fortune is made. Only we must be very careful to consider well just what we ought to wish."

The farmer's wife, of course, proffered advice. "Suppose," said she, "that we wish for that bit of land that lies between our two fields?"

"That is n't worth while," her husband replied. "If we work hard for a year, we 'll earn enough money to buy it."

So the two worked very hard, and at harvest time they had never raised such a crop before. They had earned money enough to buy the

coveted strip of land and still have a bit to spare. "See," said the man, "we have the land and the wish as well."

The farmer's wife then suggested that they had better wish for a cow and a horse. But the man replied: "Wife, why waste our wish on such trifles? The horse and cow we'll get anyway."

Sure enough, in a year's time the money for the horse and cow had been earned. Joyfully the man rubbed his hands. "The wish is saved again this year, and yet we have what we desire. How lucky we are!"

But now his wife seriously adjured him to wish for something at last. "Now that you have a wish to be granted," she said, "you slave and toil, and are content with everything. You might be king, emperor, baron, even a gentleman farmer, with chests overflowing with gold; but you don't know what you want."

"We are young and life is long," he answered. "There is only one wish in the ring, and that is easily said. Who knows but sometime we may sorely need this wish? Are we in want of anything? Have we not prospered, to all people's astonishment, since we possessed this ring? Be reasonable and patient for a while. In the mean-



“‘THERE IS ONLY ONE WISH IN THE RING’”

time, consider what we really ought to wish for."

And that was the end of the matter.

It really seemed as if the ring had brought a blessing into the house. Granaries and barns were full to overflowing, and in the course of a few years the poor farmer became a rich and portly person, who worked with his men afield during the day, as if he, too, had to earn his daily bread; but after supper he liked to sit in his porch, contented and comfortable, and return the kindly greeting of the folk who passed and who wished him a respectful good-evening.

So the years went by. Sometimes, when they were alone, the farmer's wife would remind her husband of the magic ring, and suggest many plans. But as he always answered that they had plenty of time, and that the best thoughts come last, she more and more rarely mentioned the ring, and, at last, ceased speaking of it altogether.

To be sure, the farmer looked at the ring, and twirled it about as many as twenty times a day; but he was very careful never to wish.

After thirty or forty years had passed away, and the farmer and his wife had grown old and white-haired, and their wish was still unasked,

then was God very good to them, and on the same night they died peacefully and happily.

Weeping children and grand-children wished to remove the ring from the still hand as a remembrance, the oldest son said: "Let our father take his ring with him. There was always a mystery about it; perhaps it was some dear remembrance. Our mother, too, so often looked at the ring—she may have given it to him when they were young."

So the old farmer was buried with the ring, which had been supposed to be a wish-ring, and was not; yet it brought as much good fortune into the house as heart could desire.

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Fairy stories retold from
St. Nicholas

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